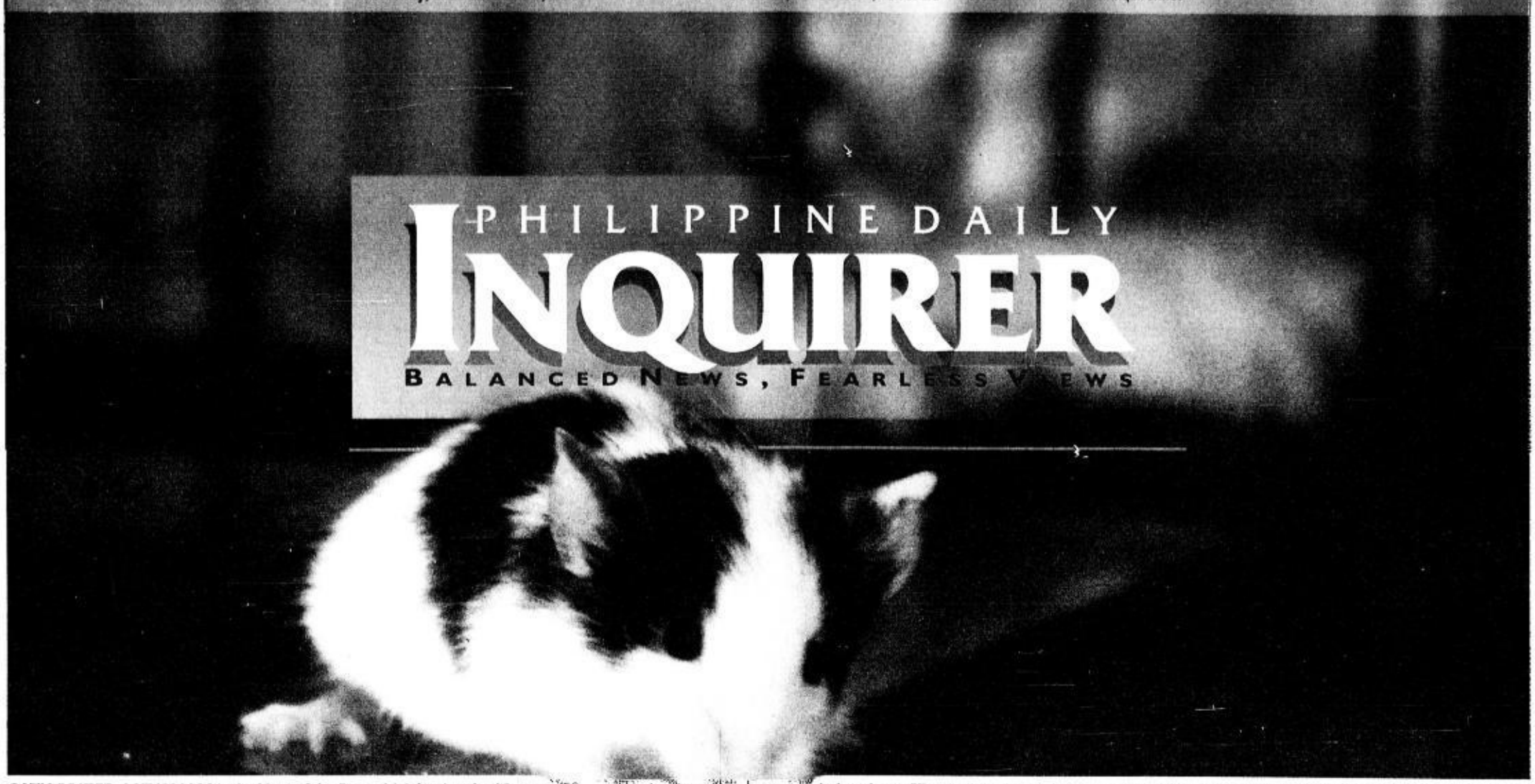
Monday, December 31, 2007 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 23 / No. 23 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS



CAT'S PRIZED CATCH 2008 is the Year of the Rat, which begins the 12-year cycle of the Chinese zodiac. According to legend, the Rat centuries ago won a race among the animals besting even the faster Ox and the Horse simply by being clever. The Rat jumped on the back of the Ox and jumped off its head before it could cross the finish line. Those born in the Year of the Rat are quick-witted and disarming but tend to be greedy.
EDWIN BACASMAS

Ping stands in Erap way

Lacson says definitely he will run

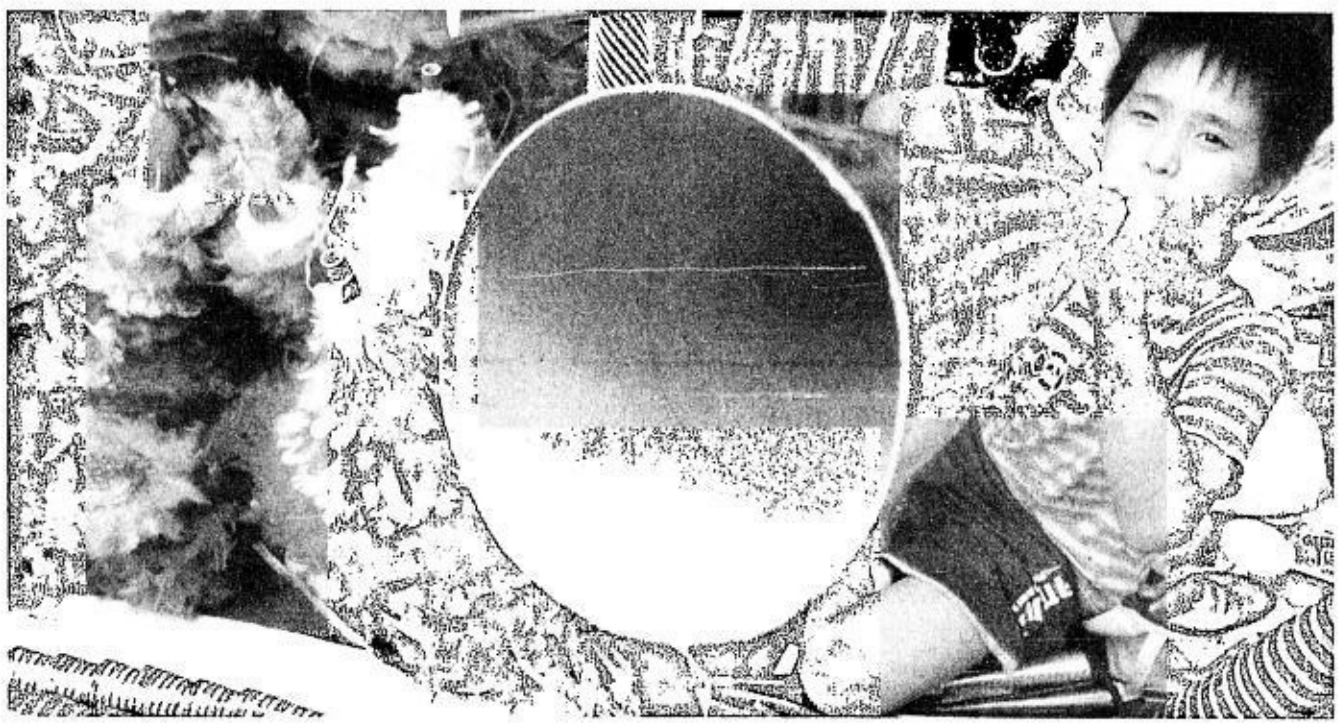
By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SEN. PANFILO LACSON HAS expressed his intention to seek the country's highest elective post in 2010, putting him on a collision course with three other opposition leaders who have made known their plans to run for president—Senate President Manuel Villar, Sen. Mar Roxas and deposed President Joseph Estrada.

"My own decision to run in 2010 will depend on three considerations—intent, means and opportunity. If you ask me if I have the intention, the answer is yes," Lacson said yesterday.

He said he would "definitely go for it" should "all three present themselves

PING STANDS/ A4



SAFE BUT SOUND Made of cardboard and plastic, these blow horns sold along a sidewalk of Carriedo Street, Manila, and all throughout the country for that matter, can sound off with all your mind and heart to bid 2007 farewell and to embrace a brand new year, and yet keep you safe and sound.
RYAN LIM

Trillanes caper tops inquirer.net most read stories; Dollywood No. 1 column

THE REVOLT STAGED BY SEN. ANTONIO Trillanes IV, a former Navy lieutenant, at the Peninsula Manila hotel in Makati on Nov. 29 and the Chinese teen who killed himself when a blind date turned out to be unattractive topped this year's Most Read Stories on inquirer.net.

Dollywood, which reports on the doings in the entertainment and show business world, emerged as the Most Read Column in 2007.

The Top 10 Overall Most Read Stories and Top 10 Overall Columns on inquirer.net for 2007:

1. Trillanes, Lim arrested; Makati standoff ends (Nov. 29, 2007)

Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim seized the Peninsula Manila hotel and held it for seven hours to demand the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo. Trillanes and his group of renegade soldiers surrendered after loyal troops surrounded the hotel, threw tear gas and drove an armored personnel carrier into the lobby in preparation for an assault. The standoff was preceded by a walk-out by the Trillanes group from a court hearing where they were being tried for their involvement in

TRILLANES/ A6

Pray for, be kind to all God's animals, Church urged

By Tessa R. Salazar

START THE NEW YEAR WITH A compassionate eye for animals, animal welfare groups have appealed to members of the Catholic Church.

After all, they reason, animals were the only ones with the Holy Family when Jesus was born in a manger.

The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta), the Animal Welfare Coalition (an umbrella organization of 21 groups nationwide and two groups from the United Kingdom) and the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) are calling on Catholic bishops and priests to include compassion for animals in their New Year homilies to the faithful.

The animal welfare groups stress that people should reduce

PRAY FOR/ A15

At last, House goes hi-tech with biometrics

By Christian V. Esguerra

WHEN MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF Representatives return to work four weeks from now, they'll be in for a "hi-tech" reception.

The House leadership is installing equipment for "biometric voting" to replace the traditional means by which

AT LAST/ A4

Filipino healing priest does so 'many miracles like in Bible'

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

HE COULD NOT BELIEVE HIS healing power. He wanted to run away from it.

A Canadian woman declared dead eight hours earlier, her organs ready to be harvested and donated, suddenly opened her eyes after Filipino priest Fr. Fernando Suarez prayed over her.

Suarez, who was then a seminarian, was stunned. "Let me out of here," was all he could say, ready to flee.

He was supposed to go and see the woman earlier but he was not able to make it in time. When he arrived at the Ottawa Civic Hospital in Canada, it seemed too late. But Suarez went to see her anyway and, surrounded by doctors whom he requested to be present, he prayed over the woman.

The miracle happened.

The woman is now well, Suarez says, and has resumed her normal life.

That case, which happened almost nine years ago, is probably the most stunning of all, but Suarez

FILIPINO/ A15

MA. CERES DOYO

SUAREZ: The gift has been with him for more than 20 years.

Word power opens doors for poor boy

By Kristine L. Alave

AT 11, MATTHEW MALITAO looks small for his age—he can easily pass for an eight-year-old—but he knows more words than college students normally would and has enough ammo in his linguistic arsenal to slay giants in the Scrabble world.

His favorite words are deasiul and equinias, among other terms

WORD / A4

Doronila regrets offending Manalo son in column

INQUIRER COLUMNIST AMANdo Doronila yesterday expressed regret that he offended Eduardo V. Manalo, son of Iglesia ni Cristo head Bishop Eraño Manalo, when he said in a Page 1 article on May 7, 2001, that the authorities had identified the hotel rooms and suites in which several people, including the younger Manalo, had reportedly met during the three days of the "Ed-

DORONILA/ A6

Bhutto's son seen as too young to be mother's successor

ISLAMABAD—BENAZIR BHUTto's party was to discuss a successor to the slain Pakistani opposition leader on Sunday and decide whether to contest an election due in little over a week, as controversy swirled about just how Bhutto died.

Without the charismatic Bhutto, 54, whose family dynasty's history is intertwined with Pakistan's, her party is in disarray.

Bhutto's 19-year-old son, Bilawal, is to read her will on Sunday but even if it names him as her political successor, the Oxford law student is seen as too young to immediately lead, and her widower Asif Ali Zardari would likely be the de facto chief.

Otherwise, the choice of a successor most likely lies between Zardari, and her top aide, Makhdoom Amin Fahim.

Bhutto's husband Zardari can ooze charm, and gained respect for enduring eight years in jail before being released without being convicted. However, political foes accuse him of corruption and some loyalists in Bhutto's party, the Pakistan People's Party, blame him for tainting the Bhutto name.

Many PPP leaders are from Bhutto's land-owning feudal class, yet the party also has a big

BHUTTO'S/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2007

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Second FRONTPAGE

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Website: www.inquirer.net/nation

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Eastern Luzon will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of Luzon will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with light passing rains. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Catarman	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: RHEA BLANCAS, PDI RESEARCH/12/31/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

EZ2

11 29

(In exact order)

Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening

9 2 8 | 9 2 7

SUPERLOTTO 6/49

12 25 28 29 45 47

₱50,468,706.00

2 more prison officials suspended

Told to reply to charges in connection with Jalosjos escape

By Leila Salaverria

THE ESCAPE OF CONVICTED child rapist Romeo Jalosjos has claimed more official casualties as the justice department has placed the head of the New Bilibid Prisons and another Bureau of Corrections (BuCor) official under preventive suspension for 90 days.

NBP Supt. Juanito Leopando and Teodora Diaz, chief of the BuCor's administrative division, were also asked to answer in writing in 72 hours the charges of dishonesty and grave misconduct or neglect in the performance of duty against them, according to Justice Undersecretary Fidel Exconde Jr.

The charges are punishable with removal from the service.

Exconde said the charge sheet and preventive suspension orders were issued on the instructions of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez. They were transmitted to the offices of Leopando and Diaz late Saturday, with immediate effect. The two are to be replaced by their deputies or those second in command.

Exconde said preventive suspension was not a penalty yet, and the investigation of Leopando and Diaz would continue.

He said the orders were issued only on Saturday because the DOJ had to check the documentary evidence of Jalosjos' escape.

BuCor Director Ricardo Dapat was sacked and replaced by retired national police chief Oscar Calderon after Jalosjos escaped.

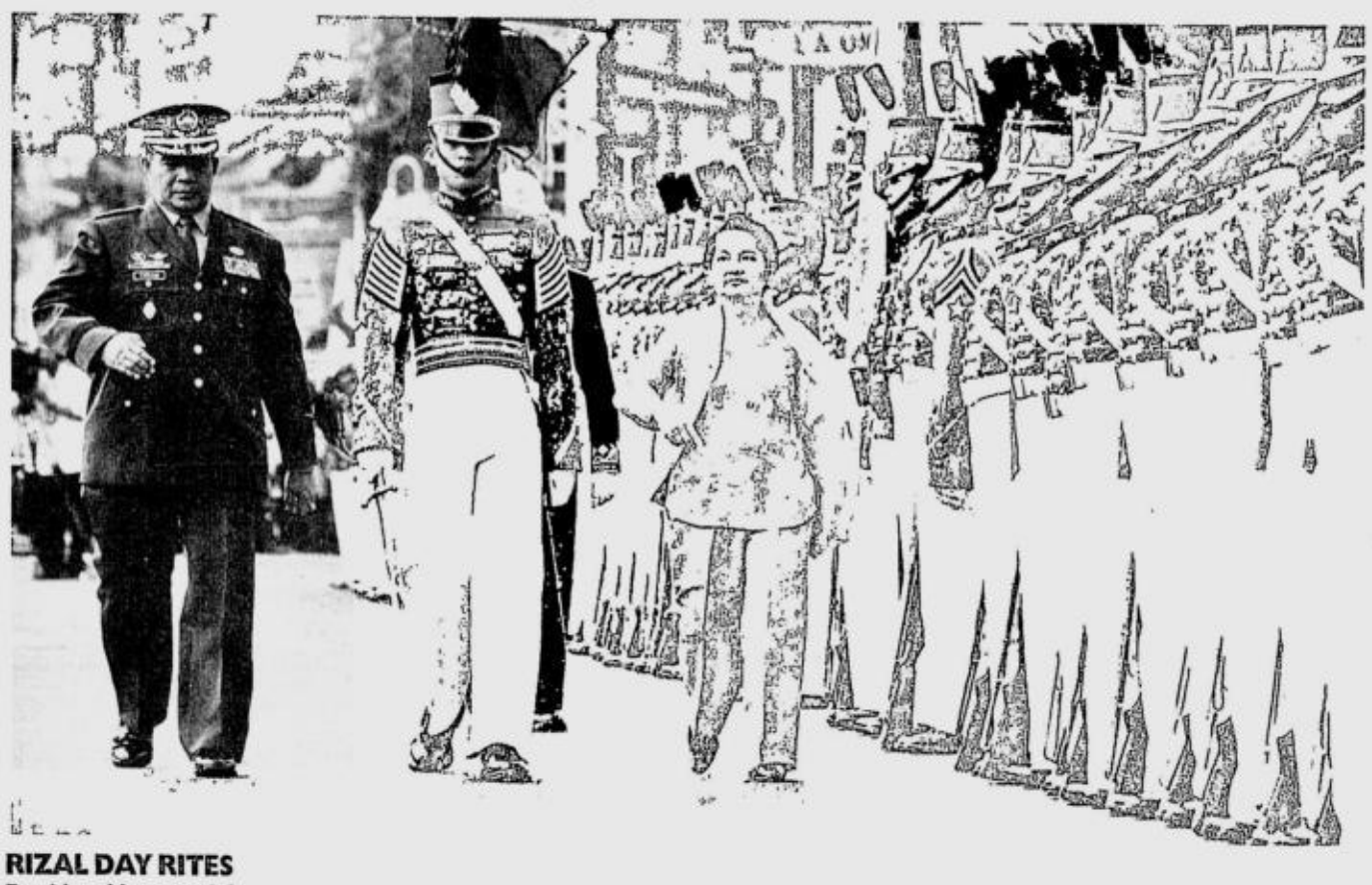
In the charge sheet against Leopando signed by Exconde, the NBP chief was accused of signing or issuing on Dec. 16 a release order in favor of Jalosjos, despite the fact that BuCor has since June a request pending before the justice department asking for guidance on the recomputation of Jalosjos' good conduct time allowance.

It said that the Department of Justice had recalled the release order on Dec. 19, but that the order was released to the media which enabled the former congressman from Zamboanga del Norte to walk out of jail a free man on Dec. 22.

"There was subsequently the precipitate and unauthorized leakage of the order to the media which created confusion and undermined the confidence in a critical pillar of the criminal justice system, and the eventual escape of inmate Romeo Jalosjos from the New Bilibid Prisons," the charge sheet stated.

The charge sheet against Diaz narrated the same facts and also stated that it was she who had custody of BuCor records and documents, particularly the release order on Jalosjos.

In a phone interview, Exconde said that before a release order can be issued, it has to be backed by a memorandum from the BuCor stating that several documents supporting the release were being issued.



RIZAL DAY RITES
President Macapagal-Arroyo marches with Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon during yesterday's observance of the 111th year of martyrdom of the country's national hero, Dr. Jose P. Rizal, in San Fernando, La Union. LYN RILLON

QUESTION FROM PEASANTS

What gains is Palparan talking about?

By TJ Burgonio

A MILITANT PEASANT group yesterday twitted retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan for saying the INQUIRER had been remiss in reporting the gains of his anti-insurgency campaign when he was in the military service.

"What good results is Palparan talking about? Everywhere he goes all the results he gives are more human rights abuses, torture, abductions and killings," said Willy Marbella, internal deputy secretary of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP).

"Is he saying it is all right to commit all these atrocities so he can free businessmen and local government units from so-called communist control?" Marbella said.

Palparan, portrayed by the Left as a "butcher" responsible for abducting and killing activists in areas where he had been assigned, retired from the Armed Forces of the Philippines this year. He is now a consultant to administration-allied Rep. Prospero Nograles of Davao.

In an INQUIRER story last week, Palparan complained the newspaper focused mainly on his alleged violation of human rights instead of the gains made by his campaign against communist insurgents.

He voiced his disappointment with the paper after the Court of Appeals issued a writ of amparo in favor of brothers Raymond and Reynaldo Manalo, who had alleged that they were abducted and detained by Palparan and his troops for 18 months in Bulacan, Nueva Ecija and Pangasinan.

The human rights group Karapatan has counted 887 victims of extrajudicial killings, including 395 militants, from 2001 to the present.

KMP praised the media, including the INQUIRER, for reporting human rights violations "as best they can."

WHAT'S INSIDE

TINY 'CRACKER' prompts DOH to issue warning /A5

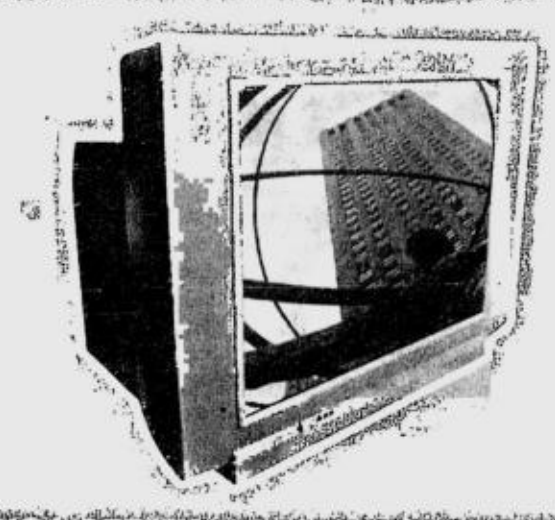
TOUGHER JAIL term on election violence OKd /A3

LUNG CENTER exec ordered dismissed /A9

LIM MOVED back to PNP jail /A5

DECEMBER IS NATIONAL ENERGY CONSCIOUSNESS MONTH

HUWAG HAYAANG IKAW ANG PINAPANOOD NG TELEBISYON



UGALING I-OFF ITO KUNG MAY IBANG GINAGAWA AT HINDI RIN LANG NANONOOD NITO!

HUWAG SAYANGIN ANG KURYENTE! HINDI ITO LIBRE!

1. Turn off the TV when no one is watching and unplug it especially if the unit uses a transformer.
2. Do not leave the TV on stand-by mode. Such setting consumes electricity.
3. Avoid simultaneous use of TV units and turn off all other appliances such as electric fans when not in use.

Electricity Conservation: A Response to Climate Change

ec way of life energy conservation

Para sa karagdagang kaalaman o tanong: 840-2267
Trunkline: 840-1401 to 214 local 329

Text your suggestions, comments, and complaints.
Just type DOE <space><message> and then send to 2920
(for Globe and Smart Subscribers only)

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
www.doe.gov.ph

WASTONG PAGKAIN, ABOT-KAYANG BILHIN

BILIHIN	PRESYO/KILO
NFA Rice	P18.25

Presyo sa lahat ng Barangay Food Terminal at Tindahan Natin.

BILIHIN	PRESYO/KILO
Regular Well Milled	P20-25
Well Milled Rice	P22-29

Presyo sa Metro Manila at sa Priority One Provinces: Zamboanga del Norte, Masbate, Maguindanao, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte, Mountain Province, Lanao del Norte, Camarines Norte, Sarangani, Zamboanga Sibugay.

BILIHIN	PRESYO/KILO
Rice Premium	P27-30
Rice Fancy	P30-45
Bangus	P70-90
Tilapia	P60-80
Galunggong	P80-120
Kamatis	P40-60
Pechay	P20-45
Sitaw	P45-60
Talong	P28-60

Presyo sa palengke sa Metro Manila.

NUTRI-TIP: Iwasan masira o mapanis ang pagkain. Itago o iimbak ang mga ito sa wastong paraan.

HOTLINE: 0929-4438014

SOURCE: DA-Bureau of Agricultural Statistics

Bill setting 20-year jail term on poll violence approved

By Christian V. Esguerra

CAN A NEW, 20-YEAR PRISON term finally discourage politicians from employing violence to win elections?

No one can really tell, but a new bill passed on third and final reading by the House of Representatives shortly before its holiday break hopes to do the trick.

Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman's House Bill No. 1882 jacks up to a maximum of 20 years election offenses "attended by violence, coercion, intimidation, force, or threats," a penalty equivalent to prision temporal under the Revised Penal Code.

"The employment of violence is the most brutal and unfortunately effective means of thwarting the will of the electorate, eliminating poll rivals and silencing witnesses," Lagman said in a statement.

"The use of violence or terrorism does not only tamper with election results; it decimates the essence and spirit of the electoral process."

Consolidated with two related bills filed by Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, the measure also punishes political parties, including party-list groups, whose member would be found guilty of the offense.

The penalty increases the current fine of P10,000 to a minimum of P500,000.

On top of the fine, the offender will be disqualified perpetually from holding public office and will no longer be allowed to cast his vote.

Lagman said his measure also "provides for the separate and concurrent prosecution of a person accused of an election offense or prohibited act under the Omnibus Election Code whose act or acts likewise constitute a felony under the Revised Penal Code."

Lagman said the importance of its passage had been "overshadowed" by more controversial measures that preoccupied media reports toward the congressional Christmas break.

Weeks before the break, the focus was on the passage of the Cheaper Medicines Bill, which promised to drastically lower the prices of drugs sold here.

One strategy was "parallel importation," a salient feature of the versions of the bill in the Senate and in the lower chamber.

Watching fireworks? Here's what to do

TO PROTECT YOUR EYEsight, just watch the fireworks from a distance.

Eye specialist Dr. Jack Arroyo issued this advice as Filipinos prepare to welcome the New Year with the bang and lights of fireworks displays.

Arroyo, president of the American Eye Center, in a statement Saturday, said that families who will be watching the New Year revelry on Dec. 31 should just watch the firework displays from afar lest they want their eyes to be exposed to possible damage.

He warned that wearing prescription glasses provide little protection against a number of eye injuries which could possibly be caused by fireworks.

Arroyo said fireworks, when handled closely by non-professionals, exposes the eye to toxic fumes, chemicals and flying debris.

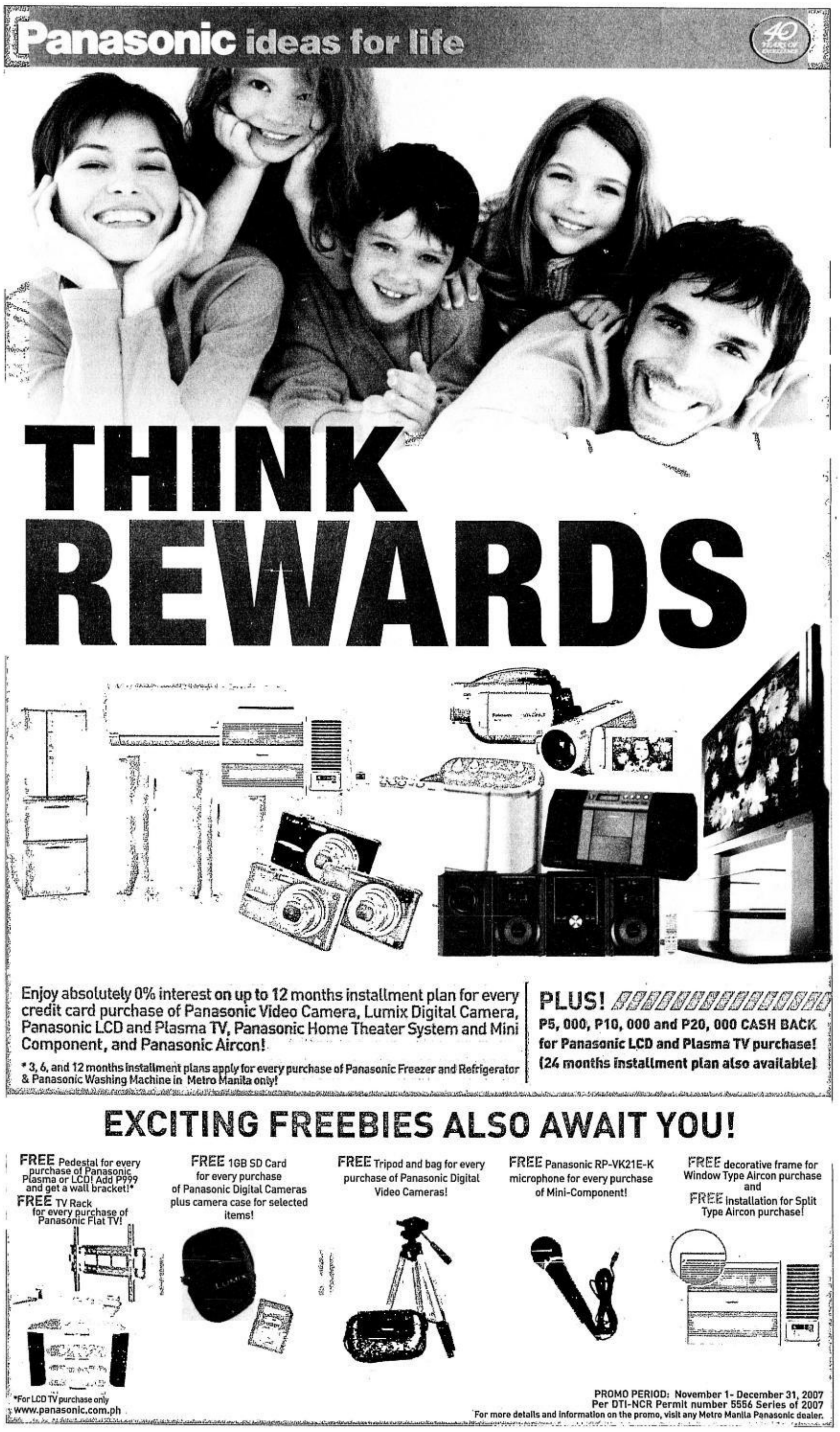
He said among the most common firecrackers-related eye injuries are contusion eyeball, traumatic iritis, eyelid lacerations, corneal foreign body and corneal abrasions.

Also thermal injuries can be caused by the ultraviolet light of fireworks. But the worst possible danger, he added, is a ruptured eyeball.

Beverly T. Natividad

CLEAR & CRISP DIGITAL AUDIO

To party the night away with the niftiest sounds and classic movies on DVD, Panasonic offers a technology worth more than you bargained for. Panasonic's VK series propagate high-quality sound through powerful two twin advance cone subwoofer systems, easy connect to DAP with Music Port and USB Plug and Play and multi-format playback including DivX®1. Panasonic's CD Micro Component set, on the other hand, provides easy setting system with slim stylish form, USB and music port for Ipod or any other mp3 player.



Palace: It's still too early to pick bet for 2010 polls

By Christine O. Avendaño

SERGIO APOSTOL, CHIEF PRESIdential legal counsel, yesterday said that it was still "too early" for the Arroyo administration to choose its standard-bearer for the 2010 presidential election.

"The President is not even talking politics," Apostol said.

But he said that the ruling administration coalition, Lakas-CMD, would hold a meeting in the second week of January "to start exploring who will be our candidate" for 2010.

This early among the possible presidential candidates in Lakas are Bayani Fernando, head of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, and Quezon City Mayor Jose Belmonte, according to Apostol.

Among administration allies, those who could run for president are Vice President Noli de Castro and Sen. Richard Gordon, the President's chief legal counsel said.

The Lakas meeting will be presided over by Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., coalition president.

Apostol said President Macapagal-Arroyo, Lakas chair emeritus, "could" join the meeting.

Apostol said deposed President Joseph Estrada could not seek the presidency because the Constitution prohibits an elected president from seeking the same post again.

Apostol said Estrada probably thought he could run again because the presidential pardon given him restored his political rights.

Ms Arroyo's counsel said that the pardon was an unconditional one.

Ping stands in Erap way, will definitely go for it

From page A1

at the proper time."

With his image as a self-styled crime fighter, Lacson believes he has a fighting chance considering his favorable ranking in surveys and focus group discussions, and the means to undertake a national campaign. He has run twice for senator and once for president.

Lacson made public his desire to be the country's next head of state a day after Estrada said that he would run again for president if the opposition failed to come up with a common standard-bearer against the candidate of the Arroyo administration.

Estrada said he didn't want a repeat of the 2004 presidential election that saw Ms Arroyo winning over her strongest rival, Fernando Poe Jr.

Estrada claimed that Poe, his close friend and fellow actor, lost because Lacson also ran for president, dividing the anti-Arroyo votes.

LOVE, ALWAYS. ERAP That is what's written on the bags of goodies that ex-President Estrada has been distributing in a frenzy of gift-giving the past days in the city's poor areas like Baseco, Tondo, on Sunday. RYAN LIM

LACSON: I'm not the spoiler.

Unfair treatment

Lacson said Estrada was well within his rights to run for public office, subject to constitutional and legal restrictions.

But he denied Estrada's claim that he played the "spoiler's role" in 2004.

"I was more of a victim of injustice and unfair treatment by my former party, LDP (Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino). It was out of self-respect that I rejected calls to withdraw even resisting some very tempting offers from the FPJ camp such as reimbursement of campaign expenses, Cabinet posts for myself and members of my campaign staff, and [my] anointment in 2010," said Lacson.

Hello Garci

That the President [Ms Arroyo] was determined to win "at all costs" should have settled the matter, according to Lacson.

"The myth that I split our votes and spelled the defeat of the opposition has already been shattered by the 'Hello Garci' tape controversy that clearly suggests cheating and victory at all costs by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo whether we were united or not," he said.

Tall order

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Sergio Apostol said it would be a tall order to unite the opposition because some of the presidential aspirants were already campaigning this early.

"They have already made up their minds," Apostol said.

Villar and Roxas have been touted as the front-runners for the 2010 elections as both have been rebuilding their respective political parties—the Nacionalista and Liberal—in preparation for their run for the presidency.

Other opposition leaders the United Opposition (UNO) identified as possible presidential aspirants were Senators Loren Legarda and Francis Escudero, and Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay.

Playing coy

Escudero has remained coy about his plans. "Erap meant well when he said that. He genuinely wants the opposition to unite," the junior senator said, refusing to confirm whether he had any intention of running for president in 2010.

"It's too far away to talk about 2010," said Escudero in a text message.

Interviewed by reporters in Tacloban City, Binay also played coy about his plans for 2010. But he dropped hints that local officials like him could very well serve the entire country as he boasted of his accomplishments as mayor. *(See story at right.)*

Unite behind one candidate

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. shared the view that Estrada could run for president if the opposition failed to unite.

"The opposition should unite behind one bet even though it looks hard. Cory (Aquino) became the unified opposition bet to defeat Marcos. Otherwise, Erap (Estrada) would probably sacrifice his new tranquility and plunge anew into a tumultuous political life," said Pimentel in a text message to the INQUIRER.

Estrada, who was convicted of plunder in September, claimed that he could run again for president because his political rights were restored when President Macapagal-Arroyo pardoned him in October.

His term as president that started in the middle of 1998 was cut short by people power in January 2001.

An election lawyer and a poll commissioner believe that Estrada as a former president is barred from running for another term. But former Sen. Ernesto Maceda, an UNO leader, said it would be up to the Supreme Court to decide the matter. *With reports from and Christine O. Avendaño in Manila and Joey A. Gabieta, Inquirer Visayas*

What's Binay doing in Tacloban?

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—IS MAKATI City Mayor Jejomar Binay starting to test the political waters for the presidential race in 2010?

Political observers raised this question after Binay and his staff gave indications that his visit here yesterday was not just to take part in the city's commemoration of Jose Rizal's martyrdom.

Binay, interviewed by reporters here, played it coy on his political plans for 2010 but dropped hints that local officials like him could very well serve the whole country.

Binay, an invited guest at the program to commemorate the 111th death anniversary of the country's national hero, said the 2010 presidential election was still "too far off" for him to really consider it seriously.

"There is time for that," Binay said, when asked his plans three years from now.

He, however, was quick to say that his visit here and to other parts of the country had nothing to do with the 2010 presidential election.

Binay said his visits to places outside Makati were by virtue of the invitations that he had received and his involvement in different organizations like the Rotary Club and the Boys Scout of the Philippines, of which he is the national president.

Binay was welcomed to this city by former Tacloban mayor Alfredo "Bejo" Romualdez and the current officer in charge, Sergio Sumayod.

At last, House goes hi-tech with biometric voting in next session

From page A1

the country's 240 representatives cast their votes on pieces of legislation.

The new technology, already commonplace in many parliaments elsewhere, will allow lawmakers to vote by simply pressing the buttons "yes," "no" or "abstain," according to Deputy Minority Leader Roilo Golez.

The vote will later be verified using the individual fingerprints of the members of the House. The results will be flashed on a screen to be installed at the plenary hall.

Speed and accuracy

Golez said the same technology would be used during roll call, a procedure that often ate up valuable minutes of plenary work.

"The beauty of this new technology is in its speed and accuracy," the Parañaque lawmaker told the INQUIRER.

Biometrics refers to "automated methods of recognizing a person based on a physiological or behavioral characteristic," says the website of the US-based The Biometric Consortium.

"Biometric technologies are becoming the foundation of an extensive array of highly secure identification and personal verification solutions," the consortium said.

Fingerprint scanner

"As the level of security breaches and transaction fraud increases, the need for highly secure identification and personal verification technologies is becoming apparent," it said.

In the case of the House of Representatives, each of the gadgets, which would go with a fingerprint scanner, will be installed on every lawmaker's table at the session hall.

The installation was the reason the House leadership decided to move the resumption of legislative work from Jan. 21 to Jan. 28.

Golez said the biometric voting system, reportedly costing P15 million, would be put to better use during voting on third reading.

Speeches

At this stage, he noted that the common "nominal" voting—especially on controversial measures—was often long and arduous because each of the lawmakers had the option to explain his or her vote.

The problem with snail-paced voting was also apparent in the 13th Congress when the majority in the chamber voted to kill two impeachment complaints against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Many of the members of the House then spent a significant amount of time delivering impassioned speeches to explain their votes.

"To me, the new system is very welcome considering that we are a very large body with 240 members," Golez said. "It will cure the problem with accuracy."

With the coming of new technology to the lower house, he said the body would apparently need to incorporate the biometric voting system in its rules.

Word power opens doors for poor boy through Scrabble tournaments

From page A1

that do not appear in online dictionaries but are accepted in Scrabble. In competitions, he usually plays the game standing up so he could reach across the table and place tiles on the farthest side of the board.

The National Association for Scrabble in the Philippines (Nascap) currently ranks Matthew, son of a tricycle driver plying a depressed area in Quezon City, as the No. 2 Filipino player under the age of 17. He ranks just below another QC-based wordsmith, Louie de Guzman, 16.

Somewhere happy

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Matthew said the game simply takes him to somewhere "happy," where letters "swim" in his mind. His favorite words may not always be high scoring, but he said he likes them because they are "deep."

Among the words Matthew played during his last tournament—the 1st Philippine Scrabble Open held at the SM Megamall from Dec. 27 to 28—were "zowie," "doggies," "reliance," and "stonier."

Matthew actually lost almost half of his 15 games, but created enough buzz in the local Scrabble circuit during the two-day competition to be considered a "killer" player at his age and somebody to be reckoned with a few years from now.

Nascap president Robert Rubina said Matthew could have topped the World Youth Tournament held in Malaysia in November had he been able to compete there. (The boy was all set to go on his first-ever overseas trip but it was canceled because of lack of funds.)

The emergent word wonder, who started to play Scrabble at age 8, managed to build a staggering vocabulary while growing up in a poor neighborhood in Barangay Mangahan in Commonwealth, Quezon City.

Healthy appetite for words

Matthew is a sixth grader at Manuel Luiz Elementary School, while his sister, 14-year-old Traci, who is another Scrabble whiz, goes to Commonwealth National High School.

Their father Jun Malitao is a tricycle driver; mother Shirley tends a small sari-sari store.

He was introduced to Scrabble in Barangay Manggahan when it held a Scrabble contest three years ago.

The couple observed that their two kids' hearty appetite for words has not only made them formidable competitors; since they started playing the game, the Malitao siblings have sharply improved their grades in school, their parents said.

POOR BOY ENRICHED BY WORDS Matthew Malitao memorizes the dictionary and the World List every day. He lives in a depressed area in Quezon City but dreams of getting out with his family by becoming a professional scrabble player. EDWIN BACASMAS

Matthew was in the lowest section when he enrolled in Grade I. Five years later, he has not only landed in the top section but has also entered the honor roll.

"(Matthew's) spelling and English-speaking skills improved. He's now best in English (in his class)," according to his father, himself a Scrabble enthusiast.

"And when he comes home from school, it's all Scrabble," the father said. When not playing against each other, Matthew and Traci can be found leafing through either "The Word List" (a bible for words accepted in Scrabble) or a thick dictionary in their spare time.

London, here they come

The Malitao siblings said they want to qualify for the next Youth Tournament in London in 2008.

But dreaming beyond that goal, Matthew, who also wants to be a pilot, said he hopes that by winning future Scrabble tournaments as a "professional" he could add to the family's earnings.

For now, his parents are thankful that their kids are hooked on something worthwhile. Scrabble, they said, has nurtured their children's ambition.

As to last week's Open, though, both father and son admitted it was not Matthew's time to win big just yet.

"*Masama daw yung gising niya* (He apparently woke up on the wrong side of the bed)," the elder Malitao said, noting how his son repeatedly drew "useless" tiles and couldn't get enough pieces for a bingo, Scrabble jargon for a seven-letter word.

Matthew then lost a close match against 19-year-old Gerson Antimaro from Cebu. He said he "misplaced" a "u" tile that allowed Antimaro to form "tup" and win by a mere 15-point margin.

Killer on square board

Antimaro conceded after the match, though, that Matthew was a tough opponent who just had a spell of "bad luck." He said Matthew's decision to form "uta" as his last word—instead of making another play that could have formed "out"—created an opening for Antimaro's winning "tup."

Before last week's tournament, Matthew had already secured a respectable 72nd spot out of the over 250 players ranked by Nascap nationwide covering all age groups.

And this "killer" on the square board is just warming up.

Lim brought back to PNP jail in Crame amid heavy security

By Nikko Dizon

FORMER SCOUT RANGER commander, Army Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, was brought back yesterday to the Philippine National Police (PNP) Custodial Center under heavy security.

The move following a Makati City court's recommitment order issued last Friday after the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) took custody of him last week.

Lim was turned over by the AFP to the PNP Custodial Center at around 12 noon, police and military spokespersons told the INQUIRER in separate interviews.

A composite team made up of some 30 military escorts dressed in full battle gear secured Lim as he was moved from the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) in Camp Aguinaldo to Camp Crame just across Edsa in Quezon City.

Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro, AFP spokesperson, confirmed the heavy security.

Lim's transfer reunited him with fellow Manila Pen standoff leaders, Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, and the Magdalo junior officers who renewed their call for the ouster of President Arroyo at the posh Makati City hotel last Nov. 29.

Last Thursday, Lim was brought back to Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal where he was originally detained prior to the Manila Pen standoff as ordered by Makati City trial court Judge Elmo Alameda upon the request of the Army general's lawyer.

Lim's counsel, Vicente Verdadero, had told the court that Lim has to attend the court-martial hearings conducted at Camp Capinpin for the failed February 2006 coup.

Lim had barely stayed a day in Tanay when AFP chief of staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. ordered his transfer to the high security Isafp compound.

Esperon cited the request of the AFP Provost Marshal General to have Lim detained at Camp Aguinaldo to expedite the investigation proceedings the military was conducting on the Nov. 29 incident, which the military chief had branded as a "power grab" attempt.

Karapatan: AFP liable for couple's abduction

By TJ Burgonio

WHILE IT HAS RELEASED them, the military should be held liable for abducting and illegally detaining activist couple Manuel Pajarito and Juliet Fernandez, a human rights group said yesterday.

"We would like them to be prosecuted. It's not the policy of the state to abduct people," said Karapatan deputy secretary general Jigs Clamor in a phone interview.

"This is the opposite of what Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has been saying that she does not tolerate human rights abuses. We challenge GMA to prosecute them and other officials guilty of such crimes," Clamor said.

Pajarito and Fernandez were, among the 185 victims of enforced disappearance since 2001, according to Karapatan.

The Philippine Army's 62nd Infantry Battalion presented the couple to the press last Wednesday to belie reports they were killed following their arrest by soldiers on May 11 this year at a checkpoint in Pinabacdao, Samar.

The couple were suspected members of the New People's Army.

Clamor said the military was liable for holding Pajarito and Fernandez since it never filed a case against them.

"We have no report the military filed a case against the couple. That's illegal detention. If it had a case against them, it should have turned them over to the police for the filing of charges and detention," he said.

"They should be held accountable for their acts, especially because Juliet Fernandez was pregnant when they were abducted," he said.

Karapatan cannot file charges on its own but would support any case to be filed by the couple, Clamor said.

"If they would like to pursue a case, we will support them," he said. Karapatan has yet to contact the couple, however.

Keep kids away from piccolo, DOH warns

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SMALL FIRECRACKER PICcolo popular with children apparently packs a mean wallop, prompting the Department of Health to issue a public warning against the said pyrotechnic which it said should be banned for being dangerous and illegal.

Aside from his constant plea to the public to shun firecrackers, Health Secretary Francisco Duque III called on people, especially parents, to keep their children away from the piccolo.

A small, cheap and colorful firecracker lighted like a matchstick, the piccolo was the most common type of firecracker that caused most of the injuries reported to the DOH so far.

It has also led to more firecracker-related injuries in children aged 10 years and below since Dec. 21, according to Duque, who expressed concern that the piccolo is popular with children and is sold cheaply, at P10 per box.

"Piccolo has caused more injuries than any other firecracker or pyrotechnic device this year, ahead of the New Year's celebration when more Filipinos are feared to suffer more injuries," Duque said in a statement.

He cited statistics from the National Epidemiology Center (NEC) from Dec. 21 to 30 showing that the piccolo was the number one cause of fireworks and firecracker-related injuries for those 10 years old and below, causing 22 percent of such injuries. Of the said injuries, 72 percent were blast wounds or burns, while 28 percent were eye injuries.

NEC Director Eric Tayag also said the piccolo had its fair share of victims last year, with 119 recorded injuries.

Duque called on those who had bought the piccolo to dispose of these by placing them in a plastice bag and dousing it with water to render the firecrackers ineffective.

'Fire or be fired'

FIRE YOUR GUNS indiscriminately or be fired.

Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Director General Avelino Razon yesterday warned policemen nationwide not to fire their guns to celebrate the New Year or risk being dismissed from the force.

Razon told the INQUIRER that the same warning applies to members of the armed forces. He said he had already coordinated with Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. on cases of soldiers caught firing their guns.

"Fire or be fired. This applies nationwide to all our police personnel and members of the military. If they fire their guns, they will be dismissed," Razon stressed.

Razon also warned policemen not to light illegal firecrackers. "They are not supposed to be lighting illegal firecrackers." *Alcuin Papa*

MESTIZA®
COMPLETE HERBAL SOAP
More than just Skin Whitening Soap

ACTIVE INGREDIENTS:
Papaya Extract: Provides skin whitening and moisturizing treatment.
Carrot Extract: Contains Vitamin A which reduces wrinkles and fine lines.
Banana Extract: Smoothens various skin problems.
Virgin Coconut Oil: Helps fight molds, bacteria & virus on the skin.
Calamansi Extract: Contains Vitamin C, valued for its skin toning properties.

OFFICE ON MUSLIM AFFAIRS حلال Halal PHILIPPINES

PRODUCT FEATURES:
- Organic/ Natural based ingredients
- Has 5 major ingredients
- Has 9 additives
- Coconut oil undergoes a stringent curing process
- Export quality

USES:
For pimples, black spots, stains on skin, sunburn, blisters, acne, skin allergies, hemorrhoids, bad odor, psoriasis, baldness, etc.

PEOPLE HAVE TRIED & MANY HAVE BELIEVED.

NO APPROVED THERAPEUTIC CLAIMS

Available in all: mercury drug www.mestiza.ph Exclusive Philippine Distributor: PHILUSA #28 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City Tel: 631 1731

Bhutto's son, husband hold key to legacy

ISLAMABAD—THE SON AND husband of Benazir Bhutto are among the main contenders for the leadership of the slain Pakistani opposition leader's party, which is likely to be decided Sunday.

A senior aide to Bhutto said the former premier's son was not keen to enter politics yet, leading to speculation that her widower, Asif Ali Zardari, could effectively take charge of the party until he is older.

Whatever the outcome, both will remain key figures in the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) founded four decades ago by Bhutto's father and now the crisis hit the country's biggest opposition group.

His mother's son

At just 19, the mantle of the Bhutto family's bloodstained legacy would lie heavy on the head of Benazir's only son, Bilawal.

If picked for the top slot in the PPP he would be the third leader in its history after his mother and his grandfather, Zufilqar Ali Bhutto, who founded the party and was executed under martial law in 1979.

But he has already shown signs of following in his mother's footsteps, enrolling earlier this year at Oxford University, where Benazir Bhutto was head of the prestigious Oxford Union debating society.

Bilawal—meaning one without equal—was born in September 1988, a month before his mother won general elections under military dictator Zia-ul-Haq to become Pakistan's first female premier.

"I went back to sleep and woke up to the sound of a congratulatory gunshot being fired outside the hospital, the beating of drums and cries of 'Jiye (Long Live) Bhutto.' The most celebrated and politically controversial baby in the history of Pakistan had been born," Bhutto said in her autobiography.

He and his two sisters went into exile with their mother in 1999, dividing their time between London and Dubai, where Bilawal attended school. Reports in local newspapers said he was keen on outdoor sports including target-shooting and horse riding.

Too young

At Benazir's funeral on Friday he was pictured looking composed despite his grief, but analysts say he is currently too young to lead the party.

"Bilawal is just 19 years old, he needs to be groomed," political analyst and retired general Talat Masood said.

"They should let him complete his education. When he is in a position to assume he should be given the mantle."

Nicknamed "Mr. Ten Percent" by Pakistanis because of allegations about kickbacks from his wife's time in power, Asif Ali Zardari, 51, has gone from playboy to villain and now to grieving political widower.

Polo-playing scion

When he married into the Bhutto political dynasty in 1987, Zardari, then 31, was the little known scion of a landowning polo-playing family from southern Sindh province.

He was born on July 21, 1956 in the rural Sindh district of Nawabshah and schooled in the commercial capital Karachi at the Saint Patrick High School, alma mater of President Pervez Musharraf.

He graduated from the Petaro Cadet College in 1972, an army-run institution known for its discipline and regimented life.

After their arranged marriage, Zardari gradually carved out an influential position for himself under his wife's two tenures in power.

8 years in jail

But he was back behind bars within half an hour of the dismissal of Bhutto's second government in 1996.

Zardari spent eight years in jail—five of them while his family lived in exile—before being freed in November 2004 after being cleared over the last of 17 cases of corruption, murder and drug smuggling.

His passion for thoroughbred horses was well known and landed him into trouble. One of the charges against him was that he maintained a costly stable in the prime minister's official residence in Islamabad at state expense.

"Zardari has a very tainted record. He may not consider himself suitable for the party leadership," Masood said.

"He may leave it to some senior member to lead the party. It will be more appropriate for the party and for him." *AFP*

Bhutto's son seen as too young to be mother's successor

From page A1

following among the poor.

The party leadership, due to meet in Bhutto's home town of Naudero in southern Pakistan—also where the will is to be read Sunday afternoon—must decide as well whether to contest the election if it goes ahead.

Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's opposition party has said it would boycott the election and has been trying to convince Bhutto's PPP to do likewise.

However, a senior official of the former ruling party said an election due in little over a week was likely to be delayed.

"It seems more than likely that elections will be delayed," Tariq Azim Khan, a senior official of the Pakistan Muslim League party, said.

The party backs President Pervez Musharraf and ruled until a caretaker government was set up last month.

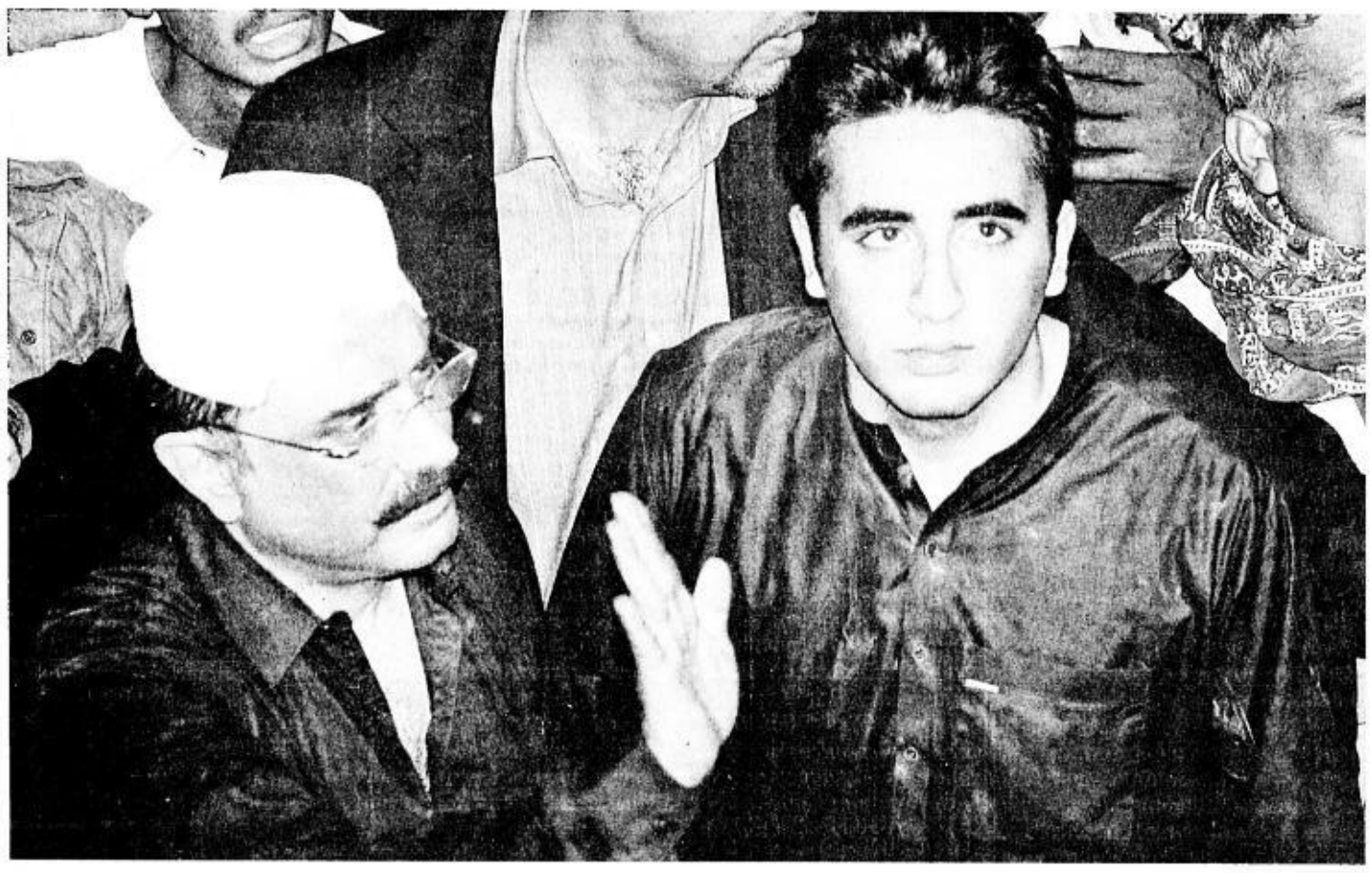
Khan said he expected a six-to-eight week postponement.

He said the party had suspended election campaigning for the January 8 parliamentary vote. "We have suspended our campaign because of the prevailing situation," he said.

So far the government has not announced any decision to call off or postpone the vote, but the Election Commission said it was planning an emergency meeting on Monday.

"They should postpone the election, as a mark of respect," Greg Turner, 50, an account manager at Siemens Pakistan, said on Sunday on his way to church.

"I think it's crucial elections are held. They are essential for democracy itself and the integrity of Pakistan. But a delay is inevitable," said Turner, among the 2 percent of Pakistanis who are Christian in the overwhelmingly Islamic nation.



KEY FIGURES IN SUCCESSION: Benazir Bhutto's widower Asif Ali Zardari (left) and their son Bilawal, an Oxford law student are photographed at the family mausoleum during the former prime minister's funeral on Friday. AP

Anger at Musharraf

Bhutto's assassination in a suicide attack on Thursday has stoked violence and thrown into doubt the Jan. 8 election, deepening the crisis in the important US ally against terrorism as it struggles to emerge from military rule.

Anger against Musharraf burns strongly among Bhutto supporters. Since her death *(See related story on Page A19)* sporadic violence has erupted, boosting fears about nuclear-armed Pakistan's stability.

The death toll from the violence has reached 47.

But streets in Karachi, site of much of the violence, were generally quiet and deserted on Sunday, witnesses said, although a disabled man was burned to death when a petrol station in the city was set on fire.

Bhutto's PPP has dismissed the government statement that al-Qaida killed her, saying Musharraf's embattled administration was trying to cover up its failure to protect her.

Although US President George W. Bush has urged Pakistanis to hold the vote, a White House spokesperson said it was up to Pakistan's authorities to determine the timing.

US hopes wrecked

Washington had encouraged Bhutto, relatively liberal by Pakistan's standards and an opponent of Islamic militancy. She returned home from self-imposed exile in October, hoping to become prime minister for the third time.

Her death wrecked US hopes of a power-sharing deal between her and Musharraf, who took power in a military coup in 1999 but left the Army last month to become a civilian president.

'Ludicrous' death theory

A close aide who prepared Bhutto's body for burial dismissed as "ludicrous" a government theory she died after hitting her head on a sunroof during the suicide attack. A party spokesperson said she was shot in the head.

A Pakistani television channel broadcast on Sunday grainy still pictures of what it said appeared to be two men who attacked and killed Bhutto, one firing a pistol.

Interior Ministry spokesperson Javed Iqbal Cheema said the government's version was based on a medical report and other evidence collected from the scene of the attack.

"If the People's Party's leadership wants, her body can be exhumed and post-mortemed. They are most welcome," he added.

'We don't strike women'

The PPP has said the government must also show hard evidence al-Qaida is to blame. The accused al-Qaida-linked militants have denied any role. A spokesperson for militant leader Baitullah Mehsud said: "We don't strike women."

Other militants, however, issued threats against Bhutto when she returned in October, and her triumphal entry into Karachi was met with a suicide attack that killed at least 140 people.

Although early reports on Sunday suggested the country was relatively quiet after the previous days' violence, two suspected suicide bombers were killed in central Punjab province when the devices they carried exploded prematurely in an apparent botched attack on a former minister, police said.

Police said they believed Mohammad Ejaz-ul-Haq, a former religious affairs minister in Musharraf's government who had earlier been staying at a house 200 meters away from the site of the blast, was the intended target.

In Karachi on Sunday, hotel assistant manager Khan's main wish was for an end to the strife that has wracked the country.

"Every six months there's a problem here. Most Pakistanis would like to work outside the country. There are blasts, crimes, too much!" *Reuters*

Trillanes caper tops inquirer.net most read stories; Dollywood No. 1 column

From page A1

the failed July 2003 coup, also known as the Oakwood mutiny.

2. Chinese teen kills self when blind date turns ugly (Jan. 5, 2007)

A 17-year-old boy in northeastern China was so disappointed with the looks of a woman he met over the Internet that he hanged himself after seeing her face-to-face.

3. June 2007 nursing board exams result out (Aug. 26, 2007)

The results of June 2007 nursing licensure exams are finally released. Some 80,000 nursing graduates took the exams, including those who had taken and passed the June 2006 exams but elected to retake them to remove the stigma that they benefited from the leak of test questions the previous year. The June 2006 results became highly controversial when a substantial portion of the questions was leaked to examinees reviewing at several review centers around the country. The controversy led to a Senate inquiry, the filing of court cases and finally reached the United States whose Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools said no passers of the tainted 2006 exams would be considered for hiring in the United States. Leonor Rosero-Tripon, chair of the Professional Regulations Commission, said the 2007 exams would "bring closure" to the test leak scandal of the June 2006 nursing licensure examinations.

4. Mall bomb blast kills 8, hurts more than 100 (Oct. 19, 2007)

On Oct. 19, 2007, an explosion ripped through the Glorietta 2 shopping mall in Makati. Eight people died instantly. The final body count was 11. Initially, there were suspicions that it was a terrorist attack. But Philippine National Police investigators eventually found that it was an accidental gas explosion, a finding that was disputed by the mall's owners, the Ayala Land Inc. On Dec. 23, the PNP announced that it would review its final report and compare it with an initial report submitted by Ayala Land.

5. 48% pass nursing exams (Aug. 29, 2007)

A graduate of Our Lady of Fatima University-Valenzuela topped the nursing board licensure exams conducted in June 2007 by the Professional Regulation Commission's Board of Nursing in Manila, Baguio, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, Davao, Iloilo, Legazpi, Lucena, Tacloban, Tuguegarao and Zamboanga cities. Of the 64,909 takers, who included first-timers, repeaters and voluntary "retakers," 31,275, or 48 percent, passed.

6. Cloudy skies may block RP view of lunar eclipse on Tuesday (Aug. 27, 2007)

A total lunar eclipse occurred on Aug. 28, but Filipinos' view of the eclipse was obscured by clouds.

7. Estrada guilty of plunder; perjury rap dropped (Sept. 12, 2007)

On Sept. 12, deposed President Joseph Estrada was found guilty of plunder by the Sandiganbayan antigraft court and sentenced up to 40 years in prison. The court ordered the forfeiture of cash and property belonging to Estrada which represented the illegal gambling bribes that he collected amounting to P545.29 million with interest, including the P200 million deposited in the name of the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation; the P189-million commission Estrada received from the purchase of Belle Corp. shares on his orders by state-run pension funds that ended up in his account using the "Jose Velarde" alias, and the 5,192.88 sq.m. so-called "Boracay Mansion" in New Manila, Quezon City.

8. Bomb rocks Congress; solon among 4 killed (Nov. 14, 2007)

A bomb explosion rocked the south wing driveway of the Batasan complex, killing three people, including Basilan Rep. Wahab Akbar, and wounding eight others, two of them also legislators. Three of the injured later died in hospital. The initial police investigation showed Akbar, 47, a former governor of strife-torn Basilan province, to have been the target of what may have been an assassination. The explosion was shown to have been caused by a bomb planted on one of the motorcycles parked near the entrance of the Batasan south wing, which was detonated by a cellular phone.

9. Pimentel son on embattled Abalos: 'Karma' (Sept. 18, 2007)

Lawyer Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III used a forum in Quezon City to accuse Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos of having "masterminded" the alleged cheating in the May 2007 elections in which he lost his senatorial bid. Pimentel said the controversy hounding Abalos in the allegedly irregular national broadband network project was his "karma."

10. '07 nursing board results out in August (June 29, 2007)

A member of the Board of Nursing said the results of the June 2007 nursing licensure examinations would be released in August, or a month later than the announcement of results of past tests, explaining that the month's delay was primarily due to the volume of examinees this year.

Top 10 Overall Columns

1. Dollywood by Dolly Anne Carvajal, published in the Entertainment section
2. On Target by Ramon Tulfo, published in the Metro section on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays
3. Editorial, appearing daily in the Opinion section
4. Bare Eye by Recah Trinidad, published in the Sports section on Mondays and Wednesdays
5. Viewfinder, by Nestor Torre in the Entertainment section
6. There's The Rub by Conrado de Quiros, weekdays in the Opinion section
7. Only in Hollywood by Ruben Nepales, the INQUIRER correspondent in Los Angeles
8. In Huddle by Beth Celis, which appears in the Sports section on Thursdays and Sundays
9. Emily's Post, advice column by Emily Marcelo, Sundays in the Lifestyle section
10. As I See It, by Neal Cruz, weekdays in the Opinion section

Compiled by Inquirer.net

Doronila regrets offending Manalo son in column

From page A1

sa III" rallies.

Doronila said what he wrote about Manalo and a number of other people was based solely on what he obtained from intelligence sources.

Doronila's statement follows:

"I regret having offended the feelings of Mr. Eduardo V. Manalo by stating in my article that he was with certain politicians around the time of the May 2001 riots. I have no personal knowledge of Mr. Manalo's participation in said event. My statement referring to him and a number of other people was based solely on intelligence sources."

Tight watch on passport fixers set

THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREign Affairs has sought the assistance of the Pasay City police to arrest fixers near its consular office with the influx of applicants for machine readable passport.

"From time to time, authorities are making arrests," DFA Assistant Secretary and spokesperson Claro Cristobal said.

Cristobal said the presence of fixers had always been a problem but that the department had always been coordinating with the police and the National Bureau of Investigation for assistance.

Even the Philippine Travel Agencies Association (PTAA) had been complaining to the DFA about fixers and the proliferation of "fly by night travel agencies," particularly those operating near the DFA passport section in Pasay City.

PTAA President Jose Clemente said "fly by night" travel agencies tainted the image of legitimate travel agencies and their organization.

Clemente said the "fly by night" travel agencies have hired the services of fixers who usually mislead passport applicants to get free passport application forms in their offices along Libertad Street even before they reach the passport section of the Department.

He said applicants are charged twice the regular fee of P500 for regular processing or P750 for expedite. *Cynthia D. Balana*

Passage of 3 bills pushed

SEN. MAR ROXAS IS pushing for the passage of three bills meant to provide a quick cash boost to Filipinos who have yet to taste the benefits of the country's economic growth in the past years.

"We need to keep more money in people's wallets. We need strategies for hope rather than formulas for fear and divisiveness," said Roxas in a statement.

The bills are the suspension of the 12 percent expanded value added tax on oil and other fuel products for up to six months, income tax exemption for minimum wage earners, and the pending bill on cheaper medicines.

Roxas said he would push for the immediate holding of public hearings on his proposal to temporarily suspend the 12 percent VAT on oil products to give relief to consumers and transport groups much relief until world crude oil prices have stabilized. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Also Try... PROEL CABLES
INTUNE PRO & MUSIC CENTER
BEHRINGER JUST LISTEN.
PERFECT HOLIDAY GIFTS
NEW
EUROPORT EPA40
Features: Ultra-compact, portable 40-Watt PA system ideal for business meetings, tour guides, classroom activities, etc. * 5" full-range loudspeaker with enormous power and incredible sonic performance in a super-light package * Built-in battery with 8 hours life--recharges completely in just 4 hours * Mic and Auxiliary inputs to connect to the included XM1800S microphone, your CD player and other line level sources
EUROLIVE B215A POWERED SPEAKER
* High-power 450- Watt 2-Way PA sound reinforcement speaker system for live and playback applications
* Ultra-compact lightweight system delivers excellent sound even at extreme sound pressure levels
* Integrated sound processor for ultimate system control and speaker protection
MONITOR 1C-WH
* Multi-purpose 2-way studio monitors ideally suited for fixed installation, multimedia, home recording studio, audio/video production and surround-sound systems
* Powerful 5 1/2" woofer with extremely lightweight cellulose cone and high-resolution 1/2" tweeter 100W
ALSO AVAILABLE IN BLACK
DIGITAL MONITOR SPEAKERS MS40
* 2-way active studio monitors ideally suited for computer studios, audio and multimedia workstations and keyboard monitoring
* Built-in amplifiers with immense headroom
* Ultra-high resolution 24-bit/192 kHz D/A converters for an incredible dynamic range
* Optical and coaxial inputs to directly connect digital audio sources by S/PDIF interface
MONITOR SPEAKERS MS16
* Compact stereo speaker system ideally suited for home studios, multimedia applications, keyboard and vocal monitoring etc.
* Powerful 4" woofers and high-resolution tweeters powered by two 8-Watt amplifiers
* Dedicated volume, bass and treble controls for more flexibility
* Stereo RCA inputs for sound cards, keyboards etc. that can be used simultaneously with second stereo source (e.g. CD/MD player) through 1/8" TRS stereo input
CE1000P BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT SPEAKERS
* Multi-purpose, 2-way loudspeaker for commercial indoor installations such as restaurants, shops, exhibitions, worshiphouses, etc.
* Powerful 8" woofer and high- resolution driver provide an ultra-linear frequency response
* Black wood enclosure with interchangeable and repaintable front to match venue interior default color dark silver
WIDE SELECTION OF STOMP BOXES
Lower Level, Robinsons Galleria East Wing (Telephone No. 634-5554), 2nd Floor, Ali Mall Araneta Center, Cubao, Quezon City (Telephone No. 995-0397), 3rd floor, Pedro Gil Wing, Robinsons Place, Ermita (Telephone No. 302-0418) 5th Floor, Building A. SM Mega Mall (Telephone No. 633-3261), Park Square 1 Ayala Center, Makati (Telephone No. 752-7066), 3rd floor Festival Mall, Alabang (Telephone No. 775-0595) www.behringer.com
NOW OPEN: CONNECTICUT CARPARK GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER

LOTUS® Ultimate Writing Instruments
BALLPEN NG BARKADA
Raffle Promo
GET A CHANCE TO WIN!
• Honda Scooter Wave 100
• iPOD Nano 4GB
• Canon Digital cameras
• Nokia 6080 Cellphones
• ₱500 Cellphone Prepaid Load
To join, enclose one (1) used Lotus® Neo ballpen or one (1) used Lotus® New Regular ballpen in a white envelope together with your name, age, complete address, telephone number and signature.
Label and send the envelope to:
Lotus® Ballpen ng Barkada Raffle Promo
c/o Marketing Department
Amalgamated Specialties Corporation
Km. 21 West Service Road,
South Superhighway, Muntinlupa City 1771
or at designated drop boxes.
Promo period is from December 01, 2007 to March 31, 2008.
See posters & flyers for details or visit www.amspecial.com
AMSPEC
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5982, Series of 2007.

GSIS
Pillar of a Strong and Vibrant Economy

It is government's desire to protect the interest of each of the members and pensioners from the government service. That is why the GSIS ensures the protection of your Fund to provide the utmost benefits that can be derived from it.

And because of the increasingly robust and vibrant economy of our nation, the Fund continues to grow - one which redounds to greater benefits for each and every member and pensioner.

GSIS loans and benefit packages reached PhP 80 Billion pesos in the first 9 months 2007. The Net income of of GSIS has reached PhP 35 Billion Pesos, up from PhP 29.2 Bilion from the previous year.

Pension grew by 84% from the year 2000 to present

GSIS reaped benefits from investments in blue-chip stocks in the stock market. This success was touted as" the loudest and strongest statement of confidence" in the Philippine economy under Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's term.

To spur growth in the Housing sector, GSIS introduced, as a first, its low 6% interest rate for its housing loans under the Sais ang Interest sa Lahat (SAIS) programs in tandem with Garantisadong Mababang Amortization na House en Lot Para sa 'yo or GMA Helps.

The system wide modernization of the GSIS was accomplished. The eCard Plus was launched together with G-W@aps kiosks in both the Philippines and abroad to hasten services for members and pensioners.

GSIS cleaned and purged its records of 2.7 Million fake members from its database.

GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM
GSIS - Kahit Saan, Kahit Kailan Maasahan.

SUGOD MGA KAPATID!
LET'S PARTY IN MAKATI!

DECEMBER 31, 2007 AT 7:00 P.M., AYALA CORNER MAKATI AVENUE

Come celebrate
The MAKATI NEW YEAR'S EVE COUNTDOWN
with us and you could be
2008's FIRST MILLIONAIRE!

Performing live:

Imago, Skarlet Swing Band, Bloomfields
Itchyworms, Parokya ni Edgar
and Kamikazee

Brought to you by The City Government of Makati
For the benefit of

ABS-CBN FOUNDATION, INC.
SAGIP KAPAMILYA

PAGLINGKURAN ANG BAYAN

SAN MIGUEL CORPORATION

ALASKA

AyalaLand

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

BusinessMirror

MACEA

Globe

RCBC

METROBANK

Photo by: Roger Alcantara of Manila Bulletin

MASS FOR THE POOR
Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales (R) blesses children and residents after holding a Mass in a poor community in Manila as the Catholic Church commemorated the feast of the Holy Family yesterday. The archbishop called on the Philippine government to stop violent demolitions on poor communities as well as to extend help to poor families in relocation and livelihood. AFP

Palace orders dismissal of Lung Center head for graft

By Michael Lim Ubac

FOR "FAILING TO LIVE BY THE standards expected of a public servant," the executive director of the Lung Center of the Philippines (LCP) has been ordered dismissed by the Office of the President.

The Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) was also ordered to immediately file a criminal complaint for graft against Dr. Juanito A. Rubio before the Office of the Ombudsman.

"Every government official must learn by heart that a public office is a public trust. Faithful compliance with the law is a vital duty which every public official has to observe. Nothing less is expected," Malacañang said.

"Dr. Rubio lamentably failed to live by the standards expected of a public servant, and for that he no longer deserves to be in the government service," it added.

In the decision dated Dec. 14 but which was released only on Saturday, Rubio was dismissed from the service and slapped with accessory penalties of cancellation of eligibility, forfeiture of leave credits and retirement benefits and perpetual disqualification from government service.

The penalties were imposed on the recommendation of the PAGC which found Rubio in violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, the Government Procurement Reform Act, and the Code of Conduct for government employees.

The PAGC's investigation report said Rubio repeatedly violated the procurement law when he entered into a negotiated contract with the New San Jose Co. instead of conducting a public bidding.

Rubio also procured the services of two other companies, Innova and CIDG, for the construction of an "art gallery and glass sculpture with granite bench, rock boulder feature with pond and other accessories," the PAGC said.

Another violation

The investigation also unearthed another violation, this time against the Code of Conduct, by Rubio who was found to have received double compensation as officer in charge of the LCP and assistant secretary for the management support service cluster of the Department of Health.

Yanks order Sulu hospital closed at night, says chief

By Ed General and Julie Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

JOLO, SULU—AMERICAN SOLdiers in nearby Panamao town have ordered the closure of the district hospital there at night, the facility's chief told the INQUIRER on Thursday.

Dr. Silak Lakkian, Panamao District Hospital head, said this had been going on since Nov. 30 with the American soldiers under a Master Sergeant Ronburg not giving any reason.

Lakkian said soldiers barged into the hospital, some 45 kilometers from this town, on that date and told the chief nurse to close the facility no later than 6 p.m.

She said the Americans threatened to shoot anyone on the hospital premises after that time.

The INQUIRER sought a comment from Lt. Cmdr. Melissa Schuermann, public affairs officer of Joint Special Operations Task Force Philippines, through a text message.

Instead of responding, however, American officials in Zamboanga City telephoned Hadja Jainab Abdulmajid, Sulu provincial disaster coordinator, to verify the INQUIRER's information that US soldiers had ordered the hospital shut at night.

"We also heard several disturbing reports from Panamao but I cannot issue a statement until I see it for myself," Abdulmajid said she told the American officials whom she did not identify.

She said she urged them to investigate the reports because it was unlikely Lakkian would make up stories.

"Lakkian is one of the most respected health officials in the province," Abdulmajid said.

Rebecca Thompson, spokesperson of the US Embassy in Manila, said: "The US government has had no role in any discussions or decision about the opening hours of the Panamao District Hospital."

"US soldiers have not been involved in keeping the hospital closed or open," Thompson said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

Lakkian said she was surprised by the order.

"I thought the Americans were here for humanitarian purposes. Our hospital caters to all the indigents in the town who cannot afford the transportation expense to the Sulu Provincial Hospital," she said.

Lakkian said she learned the Americans were serious when hospital personnel tried to turn on the hospital's generator on the evening of Dec. 2.

She said she immediately got a call from Ronburg telling her to shut off the generator.

Lakkian said the next morning, she went to see Panamao Mayor Abdugafur Abdurajak, "because I could not bear it anymore."

"It is useless to stay here because we cannot do anything," she said.

As of Friday, the hospital remained closed at night as staffers were afraid of going against the order of the Americans, Lakkian said.

Philippine Hotel Reservations Service
HOTEL DISCOUNTS WORLDWIDE!
Savings at over 400 PHILIPPINE hotels and 20,000+ INTERNATIONAL destinations!
No more calling hotels directly!
Call 812-PHRS (812-7477)
Text 0928-984-3664
Mon-Sun 9-9
We still have rooms available for the Christmas Holidays at your favorite destinations like Boracay, Cebu, Bohol, Tagaytay, Subic, Baguio....
Now ready for booking! Houses, Villas, Condotels and Apartments
Holiday Office Hours: Dec. 24 & 31 til 3pm, Office Closed: Dec. 25, 30 & Jan. 1, 2008

LOUIE'S PHARMACY
Offers
QUALITY MEDICINES WITHIN REACH

PRODUCT	SRP	*SAVINGS
Orlistat (LESOFAT) 120mg Capsule	39.75	6.75
Clopidogrel 75mg Tablet	39.75	31.52
Amlodipine besylate 5mg Tablet	10.50	34.25
Amlodipine besylate 10mg Tablet	19.75	55.00
Cefuroxime 500mg Tablet	79.50	54.70
Losartan 100mg Tablet	23.50	27.50
Ramipril 5mg Tablet	15.00	45.75
Ramipril 10mg Tablet	22.50	45.25
Meloxicam 15mg Tablet	35.00	15.50
Meloxicam 7.5mg Tablet	23.00	10.75
Sultamicillin 375mg Tablet	36.00	47.50
Sultamicillin 750mg Tablet	64.50	32.99
Gabapentin 100mg Capsule	28.00	27.78
Gabapentin 300mg Capsule	31.00	22.32
Celecoxib 200mg Capsule	35.00	9.26
Glimepiride 2mg Tablet	14.00	13.13
Methyldopa 250mg Tablet	13.00	2.75
Fexofenadine 180mg Tablet	39.17	9.78
Sumatriptan 50mg Tablet	121.80	52.20
Piracetam 1200mg Tablet	30.00	15.56

*peso savings against leading brand
Pioglitazone 30 / 15; Sibutramine 10 / 15 —— available soon

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, December 31, 2007
7th Day: Octave of Christmas
Sylvester I

1st Reading: 1 Jn 2:18-21
Gospel: John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God and the Word was God; he was in the beginning with God.

All things were made through him and without him nothing came to be. Whatever has come to be, found life in him, life which for humans was also light. Light that shines in the dark: light that darkness could not overcome. A man came, sent by God; his name was John. He came to bear witness, as a witness to introduce the Light so that all might believe through him. He was not the Light but a witness to introduce the Light.

For the Light was coming into the world, the true Light that enlightens everyone. He was already in the world and through him the world was made, the very world that did not know him. He came to his own, yet his own people did not receive him; but all who have received him he empowers to become children of God for they believe in his Name.

These are born, but without seed or carnal desire or will of man: they are born of God. And the Word was made flesh; he had his tent pitched among us, and we have seen his Glory, the Glory of the only Son coming from the Father: fullness of truth and loving-kindness.

John bore witness to him openly, saying: This is the one who comes after me, but he is already ahead of me for he was before me. From his fullness we have all received, favor upon favor. For God had given us the Law through Moses, but Truth and Loving-kindness came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but God-the-Only-Son made him known: the one who is in and with the Father.

Commentary

As children, we live always in the final hour, always seeking to live in love and to belong to God. We have been anointed (baptism/confirmation) and so all the knowledge that we need will be given to us to survive in the world no matter what happens. We have been given the truth of Jesus, the Word of God made flesh among us. Our lives have been recreated and resigned with the body of Christ set as a seal upon us. Our God has come into the world as Word made flesh dwelling among us always. The light is always there in the darkness, the truth is always there among the lies. We are to testify to that light and live in it. We are to bring that light to all. But we must begin by accepting and believing in the Word and the glory of the Word—the love of an only Son for his Father in the Spirit. Our life is in the Trinity, in the world, with one another. We are to live enduring in love and with love. The only God we will ever see is Jesus—God's own enduring love made flesh. And the only God anyone will ever see is that love as it endures in us who believe. Do we live this 'love following upon love' ever more completely, everyday?

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: cci@claret.org; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications) & http://www.claretphilippines.org (Claretian Missionaries in the Philippines)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2007

ISSN 0116-2642

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Vol. 23 No. 23

OPINION

Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/opinion

Text us your feedback: inquirer opi name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 523-5570
•Subscription Hotline 896-6000

100% soy ink

Silence, not noise

EDITORIAL

THE NUMBERS, ACCORDING TO HEALTH SECRETARY Francisco Duque, are encouraging. We have fewer victims of pre-New Year's Eve revelry-related violence this year than we had the same period a year ago. To be sure, today is the day most of the fireworks purchased or produced in the last month are used, so we will have to wait until tomorrow to know whether there has been, in fact, an overall easing in the number of accidents and injuries. It is certainly too early to claim even a temporary victory in the war on stupidity and recklessness.

A few incidents, of course, are true accidents; even products guaranteed safe can prove defective. But the great majority of revelry-related incidents are avoidable. Why do so many of us fail to avoid them?

It should be easy enough to understand the principle that guns shouldn't be fired to greet the New Year; bullets kill. That is what they were designed to do. Even the allegedly practical expedient of firing into trees or into the ground is not fail-safe. So why fire guns at all?

One guess: Because too many of us fail to see that the risks apply to us as well. To many of us, violence always happens to the other person—until, of course, the next bullet fired in giddy merrymaking comes crashing through our roof.

Violence happens to other people—this is the same insufficiently reflective attitude that explains why passengers continue to crowd into what they know is an overloaded boat or why many drivers still refuse to use regulation seatbelts.

This same lack of a safety mind-set bedevils the many efforts, conducted by such groups as the Red Cross or by agencies of the government, at disaster preparedness. We think that natural calamities, like acts of man-made violence, happen to other people.

We take encouragement from the apparent decrease in the casualty lists; it is possible that the regular end-of-year barrage of images of firecracker blast victims and firearms-inflicted injuries has brought more and more Filipinos to their senses. The annual gun-sealing exercise that members of the country's armed services go through may strike many as PR gimmickry, but it is possible that over the years it has made a strong impression. Exhortations from church pulpits may no longer put the fear of God in the faithful, but it is possible that they do add moral suasion to the argument against revelry-related violence.

But much more remains to be done.

We understand that tireless Gunless Society advocate Nandy Pacheco has proposed a weeklong firearms holiday during the Christmas-New Year's season; this may be worth considering, if only to lessen the probability of firearms-inflicted violence.

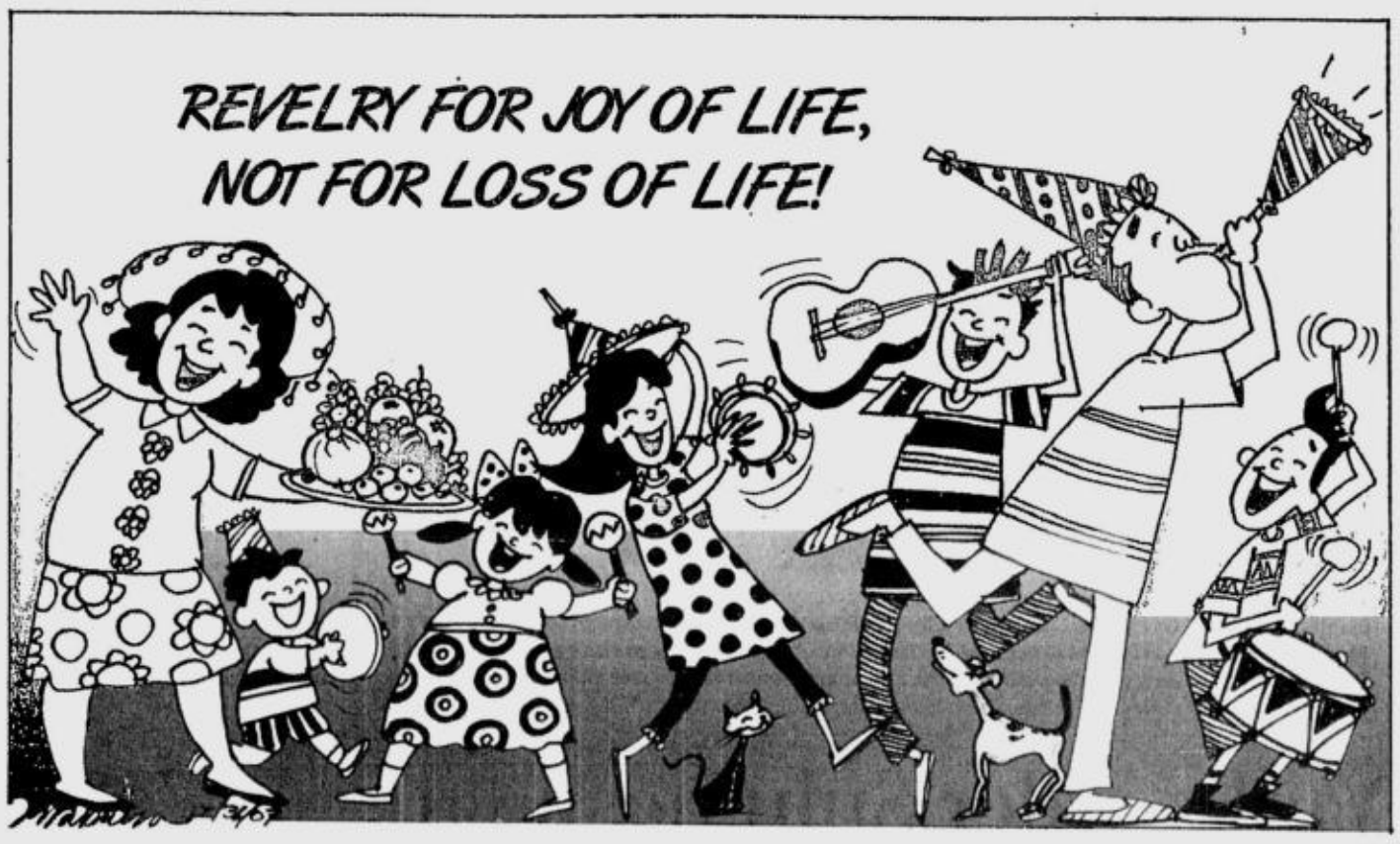
If we can reduce the number of injuries caused by New Year's Eve merrymakers firing their guns, then we would have started the year right. If we can mete out harsher punishment to those who cause firearms-inflicted injuries or even deaths, then we would have greeted the New Year with a truly big bang: the sound of justice faithfully served. If we can still the guns for a day, or for a week, then we would have made way for the biggest sound of all: the silence of peacemakers.

Publisher ISAGANI YAMBOT
Editor in Chief LETTY JIMENEZ-MAGSANOC
Managing Editor JOSE MA. D. NOLASCO
Associate Editor ABELARDO S. ULANDAY
Associate Editor for Readership ROSARIO A. GARCELLANO
Opinion Editor JORGE V. ARUTA
News Editor ARTEMIO T. ENGRACIA JR. • *Chief, Page One Operations* NILO B. PAUROM
Chief, News Day Desk RUBEN G. ALABASTRO
National Editor PERGENTINO B. BANDAYREL JR.
Senior Desk Editor JUAN V. SARMIENTO JR.
Editorial Consultant AMANDO DORONILA
Chief Photographer ERNIE U. SARMIENTO
Art & Design Director LYNETT A. VILLARIBA

Board Chairman MARIXI R. PRIETO
President ALEXANDRA PRIETO-ROMUALDEZ
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing RENATO R. REINOSO
VP for Advertising FELIPE R. OLARTE
AVP for Circulation SANDY SIMON R. YAP

Readers' Advocate LORNA KALAW TIROL
readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph • Tel. No. 897-8808, Loc. 342

All rights reserved. Except as permitted by law, no part of the Philippine Daily Inquirer may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means stored in a database or retrieval system without its prior written permission.



Stop the manufacturers to stop the mayhem

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYBODY. FULFILL your New Year's resolutions.

* * *

Tonight, the Philippines will be like a war zone: explosions everywhere, fires here and there, smoke rising like a fog, the air smelling of burnt gunpowder, fireworks lighting the night sky. The hospitals will be filled with the dead, dying and injured; the fingers and limbs of some will have to be amputated. And yet we call all of that "merrymaking." What a way to make merry!

Every year, the authorities go through the same rigmarole of trying to reduce the bloodletting. After the "merrymaking," however, the number of casualties is as high as ever. But after the corpses are buried, we forget the mayhem and repeat the carnage the next year. Why do we do this to ourselves?

Because of tradition. Because foreigners taught us to drive away the old year and welcome the new one with noise. And because these foreigners, especially the Chinese and the Spaniards, introduced us to gunpowder and fireworks as noisemakers.

As predictable as the sun rising in the east, the government warns the people against exploding firecrackers and firing their guns into the air on New Year's Eve—all for show, just to show that it is doing something about the inanity but knowing that it can't stop this madness. The police seize pyrotechnics being sold, only to surreptitiously sell them later to customers. The government also makes a show of putting paper tapes around the barrels of the service firearms of policemen and soldiers, ha, ha, ha. The Department of Health tells the people in press releases not to explode firecrackers, but it knows that people will not heed its advice. The fire department issues reminders through media on how to avoid fires, knowing that it would still be busy fighting fires during the "merrymaking." And the hospitals prepare their emergency rooms, stock medical supplies and medicines, and call in all their medical personnel, in preparation for a deluge of patients before the year is over.

But nobody, yes, nobody, seriously bothers to prevent the deaths, injuries and loss of property by going to the source: the pyrotechnics manufacturers. People will continue buying and exploding firecrackers as long as these are available, never mind all the warnings and press releases. You cannot stop decades of habit and tradition with a few press releases. And we have to admit it, people get a high watching fireworks and hearing exploding firecrackers.

The solution is not to stop the people from exploding firecrackers (you can't; it's harder than stopping cockfighting). It is to stop the pyrotechnics factories from manufacturing powerful firecrackers that can injure people. People will buy them if these dangerous firecrackers are sold; people never entertain the idea that they could be among the victims.

The police, with reporters and cameramen in tow, raid stores selling firecrackers and confiscate the illegal ones—but all for show, knowing that they cannot stop the flow of firecrackers. The few bundles confiscated do not make a dent in the supply; there are more hidden somewhere. Like illegal drugs: you cannot stop the flow unless you go to the source and stop it there.

If you can stop the factories from manufacturing powerful firecrackers and instead get them to make only the small cigarette-sized ones and the fireworks that explode in the sky, then we will have the problem licked. You do not deprive the manufacturers and their workers of their source of livelihood; you also prevent scores of people from dying and being maimed. The merrymaking and the tradition can continue, but people can be saved. It's as simple as regularly inspecting the factories year-round—not only when Christmas is around the corner. By that time, the firecrackers will have been manufactured. And once made, they have to be sold so the manufacturers get their investments back. And if they are available for sale, people will buy them.

The job of inspecting the pyrotechnics factories falls on the local government units, especially in Bulacan and Cebu, centers of the pyrotechnics industries. But local government officials are easily swayed by the "*pakiusap*" of their "*kababayan*."

But with the solution offered above, nobody will lose any job or investment. Nobody will lose their lives or fingers, either. That's not so hard to do, is it?

As for the national government, it can provide incentives for more modern pyrotechnics factories like the ones they have in China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. The dangerous firecrackers we are exploding are being made by children in small factories in *nipa* shacks in the middle of rice fields in Bulacan. They explode from time to time, killing and maiming the children. Because of unsafe practices. Because the government is not teaching them how to do it properly.

Before I end, I would like to relay to those who are thinking of exploding firecrackers tonight some thoughts from doctors.

It is this: Tonight is the most likely time to lose fingers or limbs if you are careless. Because of the flood of patients tonight, surgeons do not have the luxury of time in trying to save limbs blasted by firecrackers. Limbs that can be saved at other times cannot be saved tonight. It takes a surgical team many hours to sew back mangled limbs, suture tiny blood vessels and nerves together. They can't do that tonight, much as they want to. There is no time. They have to save the lives of other patients.

So the surgeons are forced to amputate badly mangled limbs to prevent infection that would endanger the life of the blast victim. Remember that when you handle firecrackers tonight.

Driving demons away

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

EVERY NEW YEAR'S DAY WE GET TREATED to, or tortured by, the sight of kids with their fingers blown off, bawling their heads off in hospitals and vowing never again. Their "never again" of course is not unlike the "never again" we utter every time we manage to topple a tyrant—it never happens. We tolerate new tyrants anyway; the kids get more of their fingers blown off next year anyway.

The point of the exercise of course is to make enough noise or din or ruckus to drive the demons away. I know it's hard to break habit, or tradition—though I wonder how this particular tradition began, it's clearly Chinese in origin and we've always seemed impervious to Asian influences over the centuries—and I know I might as well bid the waves hold still as bid people not light the fuse, or wick, tonight. But as the song says, I can dream, can't I?

If the point is to drive demons away, I can suggest other ways by which this may be done more surely. Offhand, the things that spring to mind are:

One, pray. I'm just echoing my good friend Nandy Pacheco's piece of advice the other day. Instead of firing guns or indeed exploding firecrackers, he said, you can always pray. I know that is Cory Aquino's favorite activity, and I know that sounds like something best left to the cloister on this riotous, boisterous, testosterone-filled day, but you never know, it can always help. I'm not knocking it, not at my age, when the people who are dying are no longer "others" but friends and kin. I do think prayer offers longer relief from the cares of the world than the couple of hours of respite offered by the wild abandon of noisemaking—sort of like antibiotics for pneumonia versus cough syrup.

I do know prayer sends up a louder noise in heaven than do firecrackers. It is the loudest whisper there is, in heaven's ears. Real heaven that is, the one located in the firmament and not beside the Pasig River. The latter just gives whole new meanings to the phrase "begging deaf heaven with entreaty."

Two, make music, not noise. Of course the two are not always easily distinguishable. Over the last few years, our neighborhood has been turned into Karaoke Country on New Year's Eve. Well, never mind New Year's Eve, over the last few years our neighborhood has been turned into Karaoke Country on weekends. But New Year's Eve is especially resolutely dedicated to it, the belters/torch singers finding in the occasion added license to cast their voices, boosted in no small way by plunging echoes, to the winds or the ears of the long-suffering. The men's favorite is "Please Release Me" (which is exactly the sentiment it elicits from listeners) and the women's "Dancing Queen." Wondrously, the beer seems to have helped improve the singing over the years, much of it now being in tune, where before the singer was going to Quiapo and the accompaniment to Antipolo.

Every New Year's Eve, I myself play Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, alternating between Herbert Von Karajan's and Leonard Bernstein's versions. It's as near to heaven as I've been able to get on earth, and it's always a kick being able to play it loudly while the first signs of an impending din, or aural super storm are setting in. It's always a kick as well being able to torment the people shouting "Please Release Me" with my diabolical racket. Like I said, music and noise are not always easily distinguishable. Depends on the listener.

Three, remember old friends, cherish new ones. Better still, keep their company either physically or electronically today. New Year's Eve seems especially conducive to marking time—it is a line of demarcation unto itself—end and beginning, death and rebirth, remembrance and hope. Nothing drives home the point more than the miracle of friends.

Years ago, someone gave me a copy of Isak Dinesen's "Babette's Feast," a wondrous story about abundance amid austerity, fulfillment amid frustration, grace amid obligation. The movie, a Danish production, is just as wondrous, but may be harder to find (I don't have it myself). Just get the book. I can at least guarantee it will chase away your personal demons of frustration and disappointment and hurts and give you a new way of looking at life.

Four, some demons are personal, others are national: Don't just light a candle, curse the darkness. Some noises are better than others.

I'm not entirely a subscriber to Joecon's favorite motto about it being better to light a candle than curse the darkness. Certainly not the way many people interpret it these days, which is to ignore injustice and just concentrate on "positive" things. There is nothing positive about ignoring injustice, all it does is completely negatively strengthen it. It's all very well to light a candle than curse the darkness when the darkness is nobody's fault, it just happened to be there. If the darkness is somebody's fault, light a candle **and** curse the darkness—or the cause of the darkness. And I don't mean Napocor. You don't curse the cause of the disruption of electricity, you'll spend an eternity lighting candles.

Five, maybe it's time to try peace and quiet. We've tried firecrackers, we've tried curses, we've tried Pen and Ink (or Oakwood, in some cases), and none of them seems to work. Maybe we can try introspection. I've always wondered in any case where that idea came from—that demons detest noise and commotion. The opposite seems truer: Demons thrive on them. Maybe it's by looking into our own hearts and listening to the sounds of silence that we can hear the sound of the one hand clapping, as the Zen Buddhists put it. Whatever the hell that means.

Six, when everything else fails, make love, not war. Some explosions are more blissful than others.

Agrarian reform

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

AS WE ENTER INTO THE YEAR 2008 THERE will be more legal controversies. Among those which I hope will be settled are those involving agrarian reform. For one, the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL) is about to expire. Should it be extended in its present form or in an amended form? Or should it be extended at all?

Much will be said about this in the coming months. There are those who say that the law in its present form is a failure but is remediable; but there are also those who say that the government is incapable of making any land reform law a success.

Even under the present CARL, there are controversies which will still have to be settled. And the farmers of Sumilao will be very much in the thick of the fray.

One interesting and novel question which came up in a discussion I had with a number of lawyers is whether the law on builders in bad faith can have application in agrarian reform controversies. Article 449 of the Civil Code says: "He who builds, plants or sows in bad faith on the land of another, loses what is built, planted or sown without right to indemnity." And Article 450 says: "The owner of the land on which anything has been built, planted or sown in bad faith may demand the demolition of the work, or that the planting or sowing be removed, in order to replace things in their former condition at the expense of the person who built, planted or sowed; or he may compel the builder or planter to pay the price of the land, and the sower the proper rent."

Admittedly, the literal language of the law says that one is a builder in bad faith if he builds or sows on land that does not belong to him. But can the principle be extended to one who builds in violation of agrarian law, as in the case of one who builds on land that has been converted to agro-industrial use but who does not follow the conditions imposed by the conversion order? Just asking.

And if it is the registered owner of the land who builds in violation of the terms of the conversion order, what should the government do about the construction already completed? What would the much vaunted rule of law dictate? Again, just asking.

Obviously I am referring to the President's order of Dec. 18, 2007 which says that "the unilateral development of subject landholdings into a hog farm by SMFI is **not** one of the purposes for which the conversion order has been issued. This clearly deviates from and constitutes a **violation** of the conversion order issued to the respondent NQSRMDC."

I have heard it said that *ubi injuria, ibi jus*.

Another question is about the meaning of landlessness. What is the legal meaning of "landless"? Under Republic Act 6657 "One is considered landless if he/she owns less than 3 hectares of agricultural land."

Incidentally, much has been said about the 66-hectare Carlos Estate adjoining the controverted Sumilao property. The 66 hectares were distributed among 78 farmers belonging to the Mapalad Multi-Purpose Cooperative who received between .4 and .9 hectares per family. Under the law, they are by no means landed farmers.

The point of the agrarian reform program is to distribute lands to provide landless farmers with sustainable livelihood. This is why the law provides that a family size farm which is around three hectares is necessary to fulfill the program's objective of improving the lives of farmer-beneficiaries. To say that the Sumilao farmers who own lands whose sizes are far less than what is provided by law are no longer qualified beneficiaries is to push aside the very spirit of the agrarian reform law.

Another misconception that has been spread is that one must be a tenant in order to be a beneficiary under the Agrarian Reform Law. Again RA 6657 corrects that misconception or that deliberate attempt at obfuscation. Section 22 says:

Qualified Beneficiaries. *The lands covered by the CARP [Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program] shall be distributed as much as possible to landless residents of the same barangay, or in the absence thereof, landless residents of the same municipality in the following order of priority:*

(a) agricultural lessees and share tenants;

(b) regular farm workers;

(c) seasonal farm workers;

(d) other farm workers;

(e) actual tillers or occupants of public lands;

(f) collective or cooperatives of the above beneficiaries; and

(g) others directly working on the land.

Do the Sumilao farmers qualify under this law? Definitely they do. As a matter of fact, most of them were the same farmers who, before the issuance of the conversion order by then Executive Secretary Ruben Torres, had been screened and awarded the Certificate of Land Ownership (CLOA).

It is now more than 10 years since they won and lost their CLOA to an abandoned conversion order. Now they are back to square one, but still hopeful. They are back in the pre-coverage stage and must go through the inclusion/exclusion process after DAR issues the notice of coverage.

Already the contest is unbalanced, David against Goliath. The least that the powerful can do, if they must fight the farmers, is to fight fair. For instance, let the powerful forego the claim that there is a Sanggunian resolution supporting the piggery project. Where is that resolution? What I have seen is an amateurish production of a bogus resolution!

A Blessed New Year!

'Wish Ko Lang'

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

WHILE PONDERING THE EVENTS THAT MATtered in 2007—family, work, personal/social advocacies, etc.—it dawned on me that I have completed a year of fighting my nicotine addiction. After finishing the last stick I had in my cigarette case last Jan. 1, I quit smoking cold-turkey. Some friends doubted that I could successfully kick the addiction, even just for a week. Yet, starting tomorrow, I will be on my second nicotine-free year, and it is hoped, onward to a smoke-free and healthy life ahead.

I smoked for more than two decades—since my high school years. I have tried to quit smoking several times in the past and I have had several successes, the shortest was for a day and the longest was six months. In two past instances, I was embroiled in "controversies" and became a subject of media commentaries in Davao City due to cigarette-smoking.

The withdrawal stage is difficult, especially if you decide not to use "nicotine substitutes." What sustained me, though, aside from the truly convincing health and economic benefits, was the fact that I would be making the people dear to me also happy, especially my 9-year-old son XYZ, who is asthmatic and who has been reminding me constantly for years that "smoking is bad for your health." My wife Charina also did her own "stop-smoking program." I am glad that materials and programs on quitting smoking are now readily available from many sources, including the Internet.

There is no available data yet to confirm this, but I presume that the anti-smoking "setting" in Davao City also helped in boosting the resolve of "nicotine addicts" like me to recover. The city is the first major city in the country to totally ban cigarette-smoking in public places and public vehicles. It has regulated smoking in private establishments where people congregate and banned tobacco sales and advertisements within a radius of 100 meters from schools. The city not only imposes the ban strictly, it also provides the necessary support mechanism, like counseling programs, for "quitters."

Sadly, though, there are still many places in the country where the Tobacco Regulation Act of 2003 (RA 9211) is not being strictly implemented, such that you can still see insensitive smokers puffing their hearts out, so to speak, in public places, inside public vehicles and in restaurants. In fact, some of those who willfully violate the law are government officials and law enforcers.

Maybe, there is a need to amend RA 9211—to impose stiffer penalties on violators if they are government employees and officials. There is a pending bill in the House of Representatives that requires the depiction of the dangers of tobacco smoking right on the packages of all tobacco products. I think this bill should be passed into law pronto, since the current "Government Warning: Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health" is, apparently, not effective enough as a deterrent.

Here's some "good news" (from the Internet) for those who intend to make quitting smoking one of their New Year's resolutions:

"As soon as you snuff out that last cigarette: Within 20 min: Blood pressure, body temperature, and pulse rate will drop to normal. Within 8 hours: Smoker's breath disappears. Carbon monoxide level in blood drops and oxygen level rises to normal. Within 24 hours: Chance of a heart attack decreases. Within 48 hours: Nerve endings start to regroup. Ability to taste and smell improves.

"Within 3 days: Breathing is easier. Within 2 to 3 months: Circulation improves. Walking becomes easier. Lung capacity increases up to 30 percent.

"Within 1 to 9 months: Sinus congestion and shortness of breath decrease. Cilia that sweep debris from you lungs grow back. Energy increases.

"Within 1 year: Excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that in a person who smokes. Within 2 years: Heart attack risk drops to near-normal. Within 5 years: Lung cancer death rate for the average former pack-a-day smoker decreases by almost half. Stroke risk is reduced. Risk of mouth, throat, and esophageal cancer is half that in a smoker.

"Within 10 years: Lung cancer death rate is similar to that of a person who does not smoke. The precancerous cells are replaced. Within 15 years: Risk of coronary heart disease is the same as that in a person who has never smoked."

* * *

As 2007 comes to a close, here are some of my wishes for 2008:

For the Supreme Court, headed by Chief Justice Reynato S. Puno, to continue its vanguard mission "to espouse no ideology but constitutionalism; to uphold no theology but the rule of law" and to be an unceasing instrument of "justice, fair justice to all, unfairness to none."

For the Arroyo administration, the military and defense establishment, to get out of their "state of denial" and finally put an end to extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances of activists.

For the authorities, to solve with dispatch the killing of journalists, particularly that of Ferdie "Batman" Lintuan and Gene Boyd Lumawag, both of Davao City. As in the cases of the other journalists murdered in the past, the deaths of Lintuan and Lumawag have all the hallmarks of a killing ordered ex cathedra.

For an end to the vicious "all-out war" in Mindanao that displaces and victimizes thousands of poor and innocent civilians every time it is "relaunched" by the military against either the Moro or communist rebels.

Finally, I wish that our country will experience a truly peaceful and just year in 2008.

Happy New Year to all!

* * *

Comments at kar_laws@yahoo.com or karlos_z23@hotmail.com

Let's get loud

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

PASSING THROUGH NUEVE DE FEBRERO ON my way to visit my mother in Makati last Christmas Eve, I nearly committed homicide twice. (Then again, later on, on my way to Alabang to visit my paternal side of the family, I spent an extremely embarrassing three minutes at the toll gate looking for someone to pay toll to, only to find out there was a holiday moratorium on tolls, but someone forgot to turn off the alarms; so I screeched to a halt, terrified as an irate motorist honked at me, in fear of being arrested. What if it wasn't a holiday freebie but instead, the attendant had answered a call of nature?)

Still, Nueve de Febrero yet proved to be one of the most dangerous roads in the metropolis and an example of everything that's wrong with our urban planning: My quick journey featured—as the neighboring community's contribution to Holiday Cheer—several drunks who decided to scoot across the road in order to jump on to the large concrete island in the middle. Having someone zigzag his way across your lane at less-than-full speed is nerve-wracking enough; having him try to scale a concrete island and fail—which means they risk falling on the roof of your car—is equally bad. But to top it all off, there were the usual grenadiers-in-training. Which is what most young boys in the country become this time of year, with their accompanying weapons of mass destruction: the firecrackers.

The *watusi* and sparklers and other innocuous holiday entertainment, instead of being signs of holiday cheer, are like the flares used to signal the mass bombardment of trenches during World War I. Where a *watusi* sputters and dances, a young bomber, armed with *triangulo* or *bawang* , cannot be far away—and that is just a portent of things to come. Wait till "Judas-belt time" comes rolling along. Then we're talking of serious ordnance.

They say that in other countries, the firecrackers are as noisy as ours, but far less lethal. It seems easier to pack a firecracker full of gunpowder than to figure out the more intricate pyrotechnical details that allow you to make a big bang—without risking the mutilation of anyone nearby.

Boys will be boys, and whenever New Year rolls along, so does the transformation of the average Filipino male into a mad bomber.

Do this, though: pay close attention to the level of firepower you observe on New Year's Eve, and you will be armed with a rough but pretty handy guide as to what the coming year will be like.

I remember New Year's Eve 1986 as the loudest, flashiest New Year I've ever been through: it was what the fall of Berlin to the Russians must have been like. To the East, an enormous barrage took place, answered with a corresponding barrage from the West (this is in relation to where I was—New Manila). It was better than any war movie I had ever seen: the ground shook more than it did during the coup in 1989, and while the artillery of the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) were frightening, the booming of firecrackers as 1986 was ushered in was of a duration and intensity that Gringo Honasan was never able to match.

In contrast to the dawning of 1986 was the way people greeted 1987. While every patriotic Filipino seemed to have spent a fortune on firecrackers just to spite Marcos (who had issued yet another presidential exhortation against firecrackers), in 1987 everyone seemed inclined to give Cory a break and reduced their firecracker budget. It was one of the quietest New Year's Eves ever. New Year's Eve 1990, after Gringo's adventures, was also very quiet.

As have the past few New Years been. The barrage that begins five minutes before New Year and ends 10 to 20 minutes later (proof positive of the wide variance of local time among watch-wearing Filipinos) has gotten shorter and shorter, and less and less intense. Is it a sign of growing maturity or increasingly harder times? Inquiring columnists want to know.

When the majority of watches strike 12, and people let loose their hoarded noise- and concussion-makers, perk up your ears. See how long the revelry lasts: and either rejoice at what augurs to be a good year, or tremble over more hard times to come.

* * *

Ah, the wisdom of children. A couple of holidays ago, I stayed with friends in Baguio, and their entire clan.

Seventeen—I repeat, 17—children were there, from little babies to a 12-year-old girl who threatened to beat up two smaller boys for being cruel to her brother. And everywhere, were doting parents and parents-to-be, exchanging family gossip, chortling over the antics of their kids, seemingly oblivious to the racket around them.

I am not fond of children but I survived the stampeding and blood-curdling yells of the children just fine. They were a friendly lot; but my attempts at interaction always fell flat.

There was one boy in particular who apparently felt quite sorry for me. Playing with a puppy that had been brought up by one of the mothers-to-be, the boy watched me play with the puppy for 10 minutes, then shook his head and said, "You know, he bites."

And then he left me to my own devices. Another night, the same boy went around with a device attached to his wrists. When put together, the device made noise. Around the living room he marched, making "zzzt-zzzt" sounds with the device. Imagine five minutes of this: "zzt," stomp, stomp, stomp, "zzt" stomp stomp, "zzt, zzt, zzzzzzt . . ."

Finally he stopped in front of me and exhibited his instruments of torture.

"What is that?" I asked in mock-awe, trying to play along.

He gave me a withering look.

"It's a toy!" And he stomped off, disgusted with my lack of intelligence.

Suffer the little children, indeed.

Hopefully, a better year for everyone

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

FIRST OF ALL, BELATED HOLIDAY GREETINGS GO TO Sen. Antonio "Sonny" Trillanes IV. I realize he has been the subject of a number of negative news items in the past few days, including an expensive full-page ad from a group calling itself "Kongreso ng . . . something."

This young man, who has been incarcerated for more than four years with no end in sight, has stood up to powerful forces in the country, speaking out loud about the abuses of a corrupt administration. And apparently, his views—not necessarily his methods—reflect the sentiments of our people. As indicated in the recent poll of Pulse Asia, we are living under the rule of the most corrupt politician in the history of the country. Only a few weeks earlier, Transparency International, a Berlin-based organization, released its Global Corruption Barometer for 2007, showing that the Philippines was No. 10 in the top 10 countries with the highest level of bribery. Cambodia and the Philippines are the only Asean countries in this top 10 list. The study said that "too often, people must part with their hard-earned money to pay for services that should be free. And they do not see enough commitment when they look to their governments and leaders." How can we expect commitment when some of the shadiest deals in the country are cooked up in the highest echelons of government?

Now, those are issues that we ought to get angry about. Instead, we castigate Trillanes who is basically the messenger of bad news which we would rather not hear.

In 1989, rebel military units launched the deadliest attack against a highly popular government led by President Cory Aquino. They held the nation's business center, Makati, hostage for almost a week before proudly marching back to their barracks in Fort Bonifacio. Some analysts declared that more harm was done to the economy by this coup attempt than anything else in recent years. The acknowledged leader was Col. Gregorio Honasan.

Guess what? Honasan was elected to the Senate.

According to Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, Honasan was also the leader or godfather of the 2003 Oakwood mutiny of which Senator Trillanes was the leading spokesperson.

Guess what? After Honasan was arrested for his suspected involvement in this mutiny, he was allowed to run for the Senate. He won, and today occupies his seat in Congress.

While in government captivity, Sonny Trillanes also ran for the Senate. He won by over 11 million votes. As I mentioned in an earlier column, Trillanes did not engage in *dagdag-bawas* operations. He did not engage in massive vote-buying using the money of the people. He did not take advantage of a fertilizer fund earmarked for our farmers for use in his campaign. He did not have the usual troupe of movie stars and entertainers to attract attention to his cause.

And yet, he defeated administration giants like Mike Defensor, Prospero Pichay, Ralph Recto and better-known personalities like Tito Sotto and Tessie Oreta, as well as movie stars Cesar Montano and Richard Gomez.

What does all this mean? It means that we as a people have a soft heart for the rebel. Perhaps it is our personal stamp of defiance, our way of expressing anger and disillusionment with our leaders who continue to fail us. We are willing to take the risk with young, untested but idealistic and reform-oriented individuals, hoping that one day, we will strike gold and come up with someone who will lead us to a better future.

According to television reports, the family of Senator Trillanes was given two additional hours to spend with him on Christmas Day. The usual visitation hours are from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. These were extended to 5 p.m. How thoughtful of the Philippine National Police to extend this bit of comfort to a detained senator on Christmas Day.

By the way, how did convicted rapist Romeo Jalosjos spend Christmas Day? Was he given additional two hours to spend with his family? Or has it been Christmas for much of the year for him and other influential detainees? Even convicted murderers get holiday passes in order to spend a couple of days outside the National Penitentiary with their families. We have one set of rules for rebels who pose a threat to the government and another for rapists and murderers who pose a threat to society but not to the government.

These are difficult days for Senator Trillanes but we all know that Easter Sunday is always preceded by the agony of Good Friday. Keep in mind that many leaders in other countries spent time in captivity before attaining positions of power and influence. Even the recently assassinated Benazir Bhutto was in jail or under different forms of captivity for five years, derided by many of her own countrymen, before becoming the first female prime minister of a Muslim country. I have no doubt that for Trillanes, the years ahead will be better and brighter.

* * *

A number of readers have called about Miguel del Prado, the young man with the healing hands. Apparently, in my last column I provided the wrong phone number. Mea culpa! The correct number is 892-6367 and his cell phone is 0917-824-1104.

* * *

Next week will be interesting days for the Philippine Air Force. The incumbent, Lt. Gen. Horacio Tolentino, a member of PMA Class 1974 and classmate of AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., is due to retire on Feb. 7, 2008, more than a month away.

But the leading candidate for the position, Lt. Gen. Pedrito Cadungog, the current AFP deputy chief of staff is due to retire on Jan. 11, 2009, which means that if Tolentino stays on all the way to Feb. 7, his compulsory retirement date, Cadungog would be short of the one-year requirement for appointment as service commander. For Cadungog to take over as PAF chief per the recommendation of the AFP Board of Generals, it is necessary for Tolentino to retire in the next few days.

This situation is very similar to the case of Vice Adm. Ernesto de Leon of the Philippine Navy, who retired earlier in order to make way for Vice Adm. Mateo Mayuga. If our readers will recall, up to the very last minute, Mayuga was not sure of assuming the Navy post. The rumor was that another officer, close to the powers-that-be, was moving heaven and earth to keep Mayuga from taking over, and hoping that he would be the chosen one.

The INQUIRER is a member of the

PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

Agrarian reform

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

AS WE ENTER INTO THE YEAR 2008 THERE will be more legal controversies. Among those which I hope will be settled are those involving agrarian reform. For one, the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL) is about to expire. Should it be extended in its present form or in an amended form? Or should it be extended at all?

Much will be said about this in the coming months. There are those who say that the law in its present form is a failure but is remediable; but there are also those who say that the government is incapable of making any land reform law a success.

Even under the present CARL, there are controversies which will still have to be settled. And the farmers of Sumilao will be very much in the thick of the fray.

One interesting and novel question which came up in a discussion I had with a number of lawyers is whether the law on builders in bad faith can have application in agrarian reform controversies. Article 449 of the Civil Code says: "He who builds, plants or sows in bad faith on the land of another, loses what is built, planted or sown without right to indemnity." And Article 450 says: "The owner of the land on which anything has been built, planted or sown in bad faith may demand the demolition of the work, or that the planting or sowing be removed, in order to replace things in their former condition at the expense of the person who built, planted or sowed; or he may compel the builder or planter to pay the price of the land, and the sower the proper rent."

Admittedly, the literal language of the law says that one is a builder in bad faith if he builds or sows on land that does not belong to him. But can the principle be extended to one who builds in violation of agrarian law, as in the case of one who builds on land that has been converted to agro-industrial use but who does not follow the conditions imposed by the conversion order? Just asking.

And if it is the registered owner of the land who builds in violation of the terms of the conversion order, what should the government do about the construction already completed? What would the much vaunted rule of law dictate? Again, just asking.

Obviously I am referring to the President's order of Dec. 18, 2007 which says that "the unilateral development of subject landholdings into a hog farm by SMFI is **not** one of the purposes for which the conversion order has been issued. This clearly deviates from and constitutes a **violation** of the conversion order issued to the respondent NQSRMDC."

I have heard it said that *ubi injuria, ibi jus*.

Another question is about the meaning of landlessness. What is the legal meaning of "landless"? Under Republic Act 6657 "One is considered landless if he/she owns less than 3 hectares of agricultural land."

Incidentally, much has been said about the 66-hectare Carlos Estate adjoining the controverted Sumilao property. The 66 hectares were distributed among 78 farmers belonging to the Mapalad Multi-Purpose Cooperative who received between .4 and .9 hectares per family. Under the law, they are by no means landed farmers.

The point of the agrarian reform program is to distribute lands to provide landless farmers with sustainable livelihood. This is why the law provides that a family size farm which is around three hectares is necessary to fulfill the program's objective of improving the lives of farmer-beneficiaries. To say that the Sumilao farmers who own lands whose sizes are far less than what is provided by law are no longer qualified beneficiaries is to push aside the very spirit of the agrarian reform law.

Another misconception that has been spread is that one must be a tenant in order to be a beneficiary under the Agrarian Reform Law. Again RA 6657 corrects that misconception or that deliberate attempt at obfuscation. Section 22 says:

Qualified Beneficiaries. *The lands covered by the CARP [Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program] shall be distributed as much as possible to landless residents of the same barangay, or in the absence thereof, landless residents of the same municipality in the following order of priority:*

(a) agricultural lessees and share tenants;

(b) regular farm workers;

(c) seasonal farm workers;

(d) other farm workers;

(e) actual tillers or occupants of public lands;

(f) collective or cooperatives of the above beneficiaries; and

(g) others directly working on the land.

Do the Sumilao farmers qualify under this law? Definitely they do. As a matter of fact, most of them were the same farmers who, before the issuance of the conversion order by then Executive Secretary Ruben Torres, had been screened and awarded the Certificate of Land Ownership (CLOA).

It is now more than 10 years since they won and lost their CLOA to an abandoned conversion order. Now they are back to square one, but still hopeful. They are back in the pre-coverage stage and must go through the inclusion/exclusion process after DAR issues the notice of coverage.

Already the contest is unbalanced, David against Goliath. The least that the powerful can do, if they must fight the farmers, is to fight fair. For instance, let the powerful forego the claim that there is a Sanggunian resolution supporting the piggery project. Where is that resolution? What I have seen is an amateurish production of a bogus resolution!

A Blessed New Year!

'Wish Ko Lang'

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

WHILE PONDERING THE EVENTS THAT MATTERED in 2007—family, work, personal/social advocacies, etc.—it dawned on me that I have completed a year of fighting my nicotine addiction. After finishing the last stick I had in my cigarette case last Jan. 1, I quit smoking cold-turkey. Some friends doubted that I could successfully kick the addiction, even just for a week. Yet, starting tomorrow, I will be on my second nicotine-free year, and it is hoped, onward to a smoke-free and healthy life ahead.

I smoked for more than two decades—since my high school years. I have tried to quit smoking several times in the past and I have had several successes, the shortest was for a day and the longest was six months. In two past instances, I was embroiled in "controversies" and became a subject of media commentaries in Davao City due to cigarette-smoking.

The withdrawal stage is difficult, especially if you decide not to use "nicotine substitutes." What sustained me, though, aside from the truly convincing health and economic benefits, was the fact that I would be making the people dear to me also happy, especially my 9-year-old son XYZ, who is asthmatic and who has been reminding me constantly for years that "smoking is bad for your health." My wife Charina also did her own "stop-smoking program." I am glad that materials and programs on quitting smoking are now readily available from many sources, including the Internet.

There is no available data yet to confirm this, but I presume that the anti-smoking "setting" in Davao City also helped in boosting the resolve of "nicotine addicts" like me to recover. The city is the first major city in the country to totally ban cigarette-smoking in public places and public vehicles. It has regulated smoking in private establishments where people congregate and banned tobacco sales and advertisements within a radius of 100 meters from schools. The city not only imposes the ban strictly, it also provides the necessary support mechanism, like counseling programs, for "quitters."

Sadly, though, there are still many places in the country where the Tobacco Regulation Act of 2003 (RA 9211) is not being strictly implemented, such that you can still see insensitive smokers puffing their hearts out, so to speak, in public places, inside public vehicles and in restaurants. In fact, some of those who willfully violate the law are government officials and law enforcers.

Maybe, there is a need to amend RA 9211—to impose stiffer penalties on violators if they are government employees and officials. There is a pending bill in the House of Representatives that requires the depiction of the dangers of tobacco smoking right on the packages of all tobacco products. I think this bill should be passed into law pronto, since the current "Government Warning: Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health" is, apparently, not effective enough as a deterrent.

Here's some "good news" (from the Internet) for those who intend to make quitting smoking one of their New Year's resolutions:

"As soon as you snuff out that last cigarette: Within 20 min: Blood pressure, body temperature, and pulse rate will drop to normal. Within 8 hours: Smoker's breath disappears. Carbon monoxide level in blood drops and oxygen level rises to normal. Within 24 hours: Chance of a heart attack decreases. Within 48 hours: Nerve endings start to regroup. Ability to taste and smell improves.

"Within 3 days: Breathing is easier. Within 2 to 3 months: Circulation improves. Walking becomes easier. Lung capacity increases up to 30 percent.

"Within 1 to 9 months: Sinus congestion and shortness of breath decrease. Cilia that sweep debris from you lungs grow back. Energy increases.

"Within 1 year: Excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that in a person who smokes. Within 2 years: Heart attack risk drops to near-normal. Within 5 years: Lung cancer death rate for the average former pack-a-day smoker decreases by almost half. Stroke risk is reduced. Risk of mouth, throat, and esophageal cancer is half that in a smoker.

"Within 10 years: Lung cancer death rate is similar to that of a person who does not smoke. The precancerous cells are replaced. Within 15 years: Risk of coronary heart disease is the same as that in a person who has never smoked."

* * *

As 2007 comes to a close, here are some of my wishes for 2008:

For the Supreme Court, headed by Chief Justice Reynato S. Puno, to continue its vanguard mission "to espouse no ideology but constitutionalism; to uphold no theology but the rule of law" and to be an unceasing instrument of "justice, fair justice to all, unfairness to none."

For the Arroyo administration, the military and defense establishment, to get out of their "state of denial" and finally put an end to extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances of activists.

For the authorities, to solve with dispatch the killing of journalists, particularly that of Ferdie "Batman" Lintuan and Gene Boyd Lumawag, both of Davao City. As in the cases of the other journalists murdered in the past, the deaths of Lintuan and Lumawag have all the hallmarks of a killing ordered ex cathedra.

For an end to the vicious "all-out war" in Mindanao that displaces and victimizes thousands of poor and innocent civilians every time it is "relaunched" by the military against either the Moro or communist rebels.

Finally, I wish that our country will experience a truly peaceful and just year in 2008.

Happy New Year to all!

* * *

Comments at kar_laws@yahoo.com or karlos_z23@hotmail.com

Let's get loud

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

PASSING THROUGH NUEVE DE FEBRERO ON my way to visit my mother in Makati last Christmas Eve, I nearly committed homicide twice. (Then again, later on, on my way to Alabang to visit my paternal side of the family, I spent an extremely embarrassing three minutes at the toll gate looking for someone to pay toll to, only to find out there was a holiday moratorium on tolls, but someone forgot to turn off the alarms; so I screeched to a halt, terrified as an irate motorist honked at me, in fear of being arrested. What if it wasn't a holiday freebie but instead, the attendant had answered a call of nature?)

Still, Nueve de Febrero yet proved to be one of the most dangerous roads in the metropolis and an example of everything that's wrong with our urban planning: My quick journey featured—as the neighboring community's contribution to Holiday Cheer—several drunks who decided to scoot across the road in order to jump on to the large concrete island in the middle. Having someone zigzag his way across your lane at less-than-full speed is nerve-wracking enough; having him try to scale a concrete island and fail—which means they risk falling on the roof of your car—is equally bad. But to top it all off, there were the usual grenadiers-in-training. Which is what most young boys in the country become this time of year, with their accompanying weapons of mass destruction: the firecrackers.

The *watusi* and sparklers and other innocuous holiday entertainment, instead of being signs of holiday cheer, are like the flares used to signal the mass bombardment of trenches during World War I. Where a *watusi* sputters and dances, a young bomber, armed with *triangulo* or *bawang* , cannot be far away—and that is just a portent of things to come. Wait till "Judas-belt time" comes rolling along. Then we're talking of serious ordnance.

They say that in other countries, the firecrackers are as noisy as ours, but far less lethal. It seems easier to pack a firecracker full of gunpowder than to figure out the more intricate pyrotechnical details that allow you to make a big bang—without risking the mutilation of anyone nearby.

Boys will be boys, and whenever New Year rolls along, so does the transformation of the average Filipino male into a mad bomber.

Do this, though: pay close attention to the level of firepower you observe on New Year's Eve, and you will be armed with a rough but pretty handy guide as to what the coming year will be like.

I remember New Year's Eve 1986 as the loudest, flashiest New Year I've ever been through: it was what the fall of Berlin to the Russians must have been like. To the East, an enormous barrage took place, answered with a corresponding barrage from the West (this is in relation to where I was—New Manila). It was better than any war movie I had ever seen: the ground shook more than it did during the coup in 1989, and while the artillery of the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) were frightening, the booming of firecrackers as 1986 was ushered in was of a duration and intensity that Gringo Honasan was never able to match.

In contrast to the dawning of 1986 was the way people greeted 1987. While every patriotic Filipino seemed to have spent a fortune on firecrackers just to spite Marcos (who had issued yet another presidential exhortation against firecrackers), in 1987 everyone seemed inclined to give Cory a break and reduced their firecracker budget. It was one of the quietest New Year's Eves ever. New Year's Eve 1990, after Gringo's adventures, was also very quiet.

As have the past few New Years been. The barrage that begins five minutes before New Year and ends 10 to 20 minutes later (proof positive of the wide variance of local time among watch-wearing Filipinos) has gotten shorter and shorter, and less and less intense. Is it a sign of growing maturity or increasingly harder times? Inquiring columnists want to know.

When the majority of watches strike 12, and people let loose their hoarded noise- and concussion-makers, perk up your ears. See how long the revelry lasts: and either rejoice at what augurs to be a good year, or tremble over more hard times to come.

* * *

Ah, the wisdom of children. A couple of holidays ago, I stayed with friends in Baguio, and their entire clan.

Seventeen—I repeat, 17—children were there, from little babies to a 12-year-old girl who threatened to beat up two smaller boys for being cruel to her brother. And everywhere, were doting parents and parents-to-be, exchanging family gossip, chortling over the antics of their kids, seemingly oblivious to the racket around them.

I am not fond of children but I survived the stampeding and blood-curdling yells of the children just fine. They were a friendly lot; but my attempts at interaction always fell flat.

There was one boy in particular who apparently felt quite sorry for me. Playing with a puppy that had been brought up by one of the mothers-to-be, the boy watched me play with the puppy for 10 minutes, then shook his head and said, "You know, he bites."

And then he left me to my own devices. Another night, the same boy went around with a device attached to his wrists. When put together, the device made noise. Around the living room he marched, making "zzzt-zzzt" sounds with the device. Imagine five minutes of this: "zzt," stomp, stomp, stomp, "zzt" stomp stomp, "zzt, zzt, zzzzzzt . . ."

Finally he stopped in front of me and exhibited his instruments of torture.

"What is that?" I asked in mock-awe, trying to play along.

He gave me a withering look.

"It's a toy!" And he stomped off, disgusted with my lack of intelligence.

Suffer the little children, indeed.

Hopefully, a better year for everyone

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

FIRST OF ALL, BELATED HOLIDAY GREETINGS GO TO Sen. Antonio "Sonny" Trillanes IV. I realize he has been the subject of a number of negative news items in the past few days, including an expensive full-page ad from a group calling itself "Kongreso ng . . . something."

This young man, who has been incarcerated for more than four years with no end in sight, has stood up to powerful forces in the country, speaking out loud about the abuses of a corrupt administration. And apparently, his views—not necessarily his methods—reflect the sentiments of our people. As indicated in the recent poll of Pulse Asia, we are living under the rule of the most corrupt politician in the history of the country. Only a few weeks earlier, Transparency International, a Berlin-based organization, released its Global Corruption Barometer for 2007, showing that the Philippines was No. 10 in the top 10 countries with the highest level of bribery. Cambodia and the Philippines are the only Asean countries in this top 10 list. The study said that "too often, people must part with their hard-earned money to pay for services that should be free. And they do not see enough commitment when they look to their governments and leaders." How can we expect commitment when some of the shadiest deals in the country are cooked up in the highest echelons of government?

Now, those are issues that we ought to get angry about. Instead, we castigate Trillanes who is basically the messenger of bad news which we would rather not hear.

In 1989, rebel military units launched the deadliest attack against a highly popular government led by President Cory Aquino. They held the nation's business center, Makati, hostage for almost a week before proudly marching back to their barracks in Fort Bonifacio. Some analysts declared that more harm was done to the economy by this coup attempt than anything else in recent years. The acknowledged leader was Col. Gregorio Honasan.

Guess what? Honasan was elected to the Senate.

According to Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, Honasan was also the leader or godfather of the 2003 Oakwood mutiny of which Senator Trillanes was the leading spokesperson.

Guess what? After Honasan was arrested for his suspected involvement in this mutiny, he was allowed to run for the Senate. He won, and today occupies his seat in Congress.

While in government captivity, Sonny Trillanes also ran for the Senate. He won by over 11 million votes. As I mentioned in an earlier column, Trillanes did not engage in *dagdag-bawas* operations. He did not engage in massive vote-buying using the money of the people. He did not take advantage of a fertilizer fund earmarked for our farmers for use in his campaign. He did not have the usual troupe of movie stars and entertainers to attract attention to his cause.

And yet, he defeated administration giants like Mike Defensor, Prospero Pichay, Ralph Recto and better-known personalities like Tito Sotto and Tessie Oreta, as well as movie stars Cesar Montano and Richard Gomez.

What does all this mean? It means that we as a people have a soft heart for the rebel. Perhaps it is our personal stamp of defiance, our way of expressing anger and disillusionment with our leaders who continue to fail us. We are willing to take the risk with young, untested but idealistic and reform-oriented individuals, hoping that one day, we will strike gold and come up with someone who will lead us to a better future.

According to television reports, the family of Senator Trillanes was given two additional hours to spend with him on Christmas Day. The usual visitation hours are from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. These were extended to 5 p.m. How thoughtful of the Philippine National Police to extend this bit of comfort to a detained senator on Christmas Day.

By the way, how did convicted rapist Romeo Jalosjos spend Christmas Day? Was he given additional two hours to spend with his family? Or has it been Christmas for much of the year for him and other influential detainees? Even convicted murderers get holiday passes in order to spend a couple of days outside the National Penitentiary with their families. We have one set of rules for rebels who pose a threat to the government and another for rapists and murderers who pose a threat to society but not to the government.

These are difficult days for Senator Trillanes but we all know that Easter Sunday is always preceded by the agony of Good Friday. Keep in mind that many leaders in other countries spent time in captivity before attaining positions of power and influence. Even the recently assassinated Benazir Bhutto was in jail or under different forms of captivity for five years, derided by many of her own countrymen, before becoming the first female prime minister of a Muslim country. I have no doubt that for Trillanes, the years ahead will be better and brighter.

* * *

A number of readers have called about Miguel del Prado, the young man with the healing hands. Apparently, in my last column I provided the wrong phone number. Mea culpa! The correct number is 892-6367 and his cell phone is 0917-824-1104.

* * *

Next week will be interesting days for the Philippine Air Force. The incumbent, Lt. Gen. Horacio Tolentino, a member of PMA Class 1974 and classmate of AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., is due to retire on Feb. 7, 2008, more than a month away.

But the leading candidate for the position, Lt. Gen. Pedrito Cadungog, the current AFP deputy chief of staff is due to retire on Jan. 11, 2009, which means that if Tolentino stays on all the way to Feb. 7, his compulsory retirement date, Cadungog would be short of the one-year requirement for appointment as service commander. For Cadungog to take over as PAF chief per the recommendation of the AFP Board of Generals, it is necessary for Tolentino to retire in the next few days.

This situation is very similar to the case of Vice Adm. Ernesto de Leon of the Philippine Navy, who retired earlier in order to make way for Vice Adm. Mateo Mayuga. If our readers will recall, up to the very last minute, Mayuga was not sure of assuming the Navy post. The rumor was that another officer, close to the powers-that-be, was moving heaven and earth to keep Mayuga from taking over, and hoping that he would be the chosen one.

The INQUIRER is a member of the

PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

Have a safe and happy 2008!

THE LIGHTING OF FIREWORKS and firecrackers during the New Year is a tradition that we inherited from our Chinese ancestors. We have been made to believe that making all those noise will keep us away from bad luck and bad spirits. Fascinating indeed are the varying colors of lights and enjoyable are resounding booms of bomb-like firecrackers.

However, too much appreciation of these New Year stuff, plus negligence, could lead us to bad luck—bad luck that we want to avoid. Lives are put at risk for temporary happiness.

Simple is my message. For the children, learn from what you have seen on television. Never make yourselves the example of hardheadedness. For the grown-ups, grow up!

Let us all have a safe and happy New Year!

—KHEMLE JANE T. VISCA, khem_meynard@yahoo.com

Sumilao farmers have law and equity on their side

THE SUMILAO FARMERS HAVE received widespread support because law and equity are on their side. Here are facts distorted or evaded by desperate paid advertisements:

1. The farmers respected the 1998 Supreme Court decision on a procedural technicality, even if it violated a cardinal rule that no irrigated land can be converted.

2. The Office of the President revoked that conversion for gross non-compliance. A non-compliant project, no matter its economic merits, cannot be used to circumvent the law because a conversion is an exception to agrarian reform and, unless strictly enforced, opens the door to abuse and corruption.

3. There were enough indicators that should have alerted San Miguel Foods Inc. (SMFI) about the failed conversion and the SMFI lawyers (including a former assistant secretary of the Department of Agrarian Reform) are presumed to know the rules of conversion. If it is true that another 40,000 hectares of land is available to the farmers as an alternative, the same is also available to SMFI for its project, without the conditionalities of a problematic conversion.

4. It is not true, as SMFI claims, that only share tenants of a specific property are qualified as agrarian reform beneficiaries. Also qualified are agricultural lessees; regular, seasonal and other farmworkers; actual tillers and occupants of public lands; collectives and cooperatives of the above beneficiaries; and others working in the land who are landless residents of the barangay or municipality. (RA 6657, Sec. 22)

5. The Sumilao farmers are qualified beneficiaries, both those who received 66 hectares from the adjoining Carlos Estate (an average of .85 hectares for 78 families) and those who have received nothing, because those who own less than three hectares under Sec. 22 can be beneficiaries. (RA 6657 Sec. 25)

We reiterate our unwavering support for the Sumilao farmers and appeal to the giant San Miguel Corp. to stop engaging in a media campaign that misrepresents the issues and the rights of the farmers. The farmers have observed the rule of law and steadfastly limited themselves to peaceful means to call attention to their plight. Please spare them the personal attacks and give them the dignity and respect they deserve.

The heart of our Constitution is social justice. For those who are concerned about development, the experience of progressive countries and empirical studies of our own experience in agrarian reform show unequivocally that when landless farmers become owner-cultivators and are given ample support services, agricultural productivity increases, security problems are reduced, education is enhanced and the outlook for growth improves.

Agrarian reform and economic development are not contradictory but we must also have priorities. A piggery may be a good project, but it is not human development. Please do it somewhere else where the rights of human beings are not sacrificed.

—XAVIER ALPASA, S.J., executive director, Simbahang Lingkod ng Bayan, www.slb.ph javieralpasa@yahoo.com

Erap's, Jalosjos' 'special treatment' shows GMA is a rebel

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO pardoned ousted President Joseph Estrada, a convicted plunderer; commuted the two life sentences of former Rep. Romeo Jalosjos, a convicted child rapist, to 16 years; and set rebellious (Magdalo) soldiers free. These people are unworthy of such tender mercies.

In these acts, GMA plundered the truth, raped justice and rebelled against sensibilities.

—DANI PAREDES, acparedes@sympatico.ca

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

LETTERS

A literary icon with a big heart

IT IS A PITY THAT I WAS NEVER able to personally thank Adrian E. Cristobal for giving me a job as researcher at the Presidential Center for Advanced Studies in 1980.

I was at the time a freshman at the College of Law of the University of Santo Tomas, and I wanted to have a job to augment my allowance from my family. Adrian was then the presidential spokesman and I told him in my letter that I spearheaded in 1975 the petition for the restoration of the school paper of UP Iloilo and presented the petition to UP president Salvador P. Lopez who was then in Iloilo City.

After a few months, Lopez directed Dean Manuel to cause the revival of the school paper, and I became its first editor in chief having topped the competitive examinations for editorship. It was the first student paper restored in the Visayas and Mindanao during the early years of martial law, and the only paper in the South to publish Lopez's critical piece titled "The Philippines under Martial Law."

I also told Adrian that I came to know of the assistance he extended to writers who have been detained, and I told him I was looking for a job in Manila.

A few days after I mailed the letter, I received a telegram from poet Cirilo F. Bautista to report for work at the PCAS.

Although I did not stay long at the PCAS because I returned to the Visayas, I will always be indebted to Adrian Cristobal and will always be in awe of the bigness of his heart—he speedily responded to my plea although I was a complete stranger to him, and he will always be my type of literary icon: a man of letters in the high echelon of the State (like Andre Malraux, the French philosopher-bureaucrat).

—EDWARD B. CONTRERAS, presiding judge, Regional Trial Court, Branch 17, Roxas City

Clarification on Taal Lake's fish cages

PLEASE ALLOW US TO CLARIFY certain facts in the article "Fish cages rise near danger zone at Taal Volcano." (INQUIRER, 12/11/07)

Please note that during its meeting last Nov. 14, the Protected Areas Management Board (PAMB) did not approve "a resolution ... to include the island in the Taal Lake's fish cage zones." Rather, a consensus was reached to consider the request of two barangays (Tabla and San Isidro) under the municipality of Talisay, Batangas to be included in the fish cage zone, based on the Unified Rules and Regulations (URR) for fisheries development.

However, two days later, during a press conference immediately following a tree planting activity at Volcano Island, Environment Secretary Lito Atienza called for the phasing out of existing fish cages in the lake within two years.

Under Sec. 10 of Republic Act 7586, also known as the National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas) Act, the environment secretary is empowered to enforce policies that will preserve and control activities that may threaten the ecological balance in protected areas.

The secretary's directive is in line with the agency's mandate to promote the preservation of Taal Lake, which is the Calabarzon's largest protected area, and to protect the endemic fish species that make the lake its natural habitat. However, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the PAMB are aware that the fish cages provide livelihood to majority of the communities surrounding the lake, and are willing to study possible alternative livelihood for those who may be affected by the directive.

During the same meeting, the PAMB executive committee did agree to draft a resolution requesting the environment secretary to further review the URR. To date, no such resolution has been drafted and submitted to the DENR.

We hope to have clarified the issue in the spirit of balanced and fair journalism.

—EDUARDO B. PRINCIPE, Ceso 4, officer in charge, regional executive director, Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Calabarzon Region

---

A tape recording of the PAMB meeting last Nov. 14 would prove that the PAMB executive committee did pass a resolution that would include the Taal Volcano Island in Talisay among the fish cage zones of Taal Lake. The resolution was filed, through a motion, by Talisay Mayor Florencio Manimtim, and was duly seconded by Leah Villanueva, chair of PAMB Subcommittee on Fisheries.

Representatives of the environmental non-government organization who were present in that meeting have also clarified to this writer that the resolution was approved "verbally."

I do not know, however, whether written documents of the resolution have reached the DENR office.

—MARLON ALEXANDER LUISTRO, correspondent, Inquirer Southern Luzon

'Educational' visits to malls, TV shows?

MAY I THANK MICHAEL L. TAN for writing about the "The rise and rise of the mall." (INQUIRER, 12/2/07) I agree with every single word he wrote.

Of late, I've also noticed that some schools now consider a visit to the mall to be part of an "educational field trip." I have seen many buses, with banners proclaiming "University of So and So" in the parking lots of malls. Most of these schools are in the provinces. I don't know what is educational about visiting malls, save for the sheer sizes of the malls. If the students are studying architecture, then it might make sense to visit one.

Also, I have noticed that schools consider an excursion to a TV show "educational." Really now.

—MAY AGARAN, may.agaran@gmail.com

Informing and inspiring Filipino readers for more than two decades through balanced news and fearless views, the Philippine Daily Inquirer has undoubtedly become the country's number 1 newspaper. Our heartfelt thanks for making the Inquirer a part of your daily reading habit.

As we celebrate our 22nd anniversary, Inquirer grants 22 loyal readers their wishes – from an exciting wish like meeting your local idol to a romantic one like celebrating your 25th wedding anniversary in a beach resort. Let us know what you really want. In 300 words or less, tell us

1) How long have you been reading the Philippine Daily Inquirer?
2) What do you like most about the Inquirer, and we dare ask, what do you like least?
3) What is your number 1 wish that Inquirer can grant you, and why?

Here's how to join:

1) Answer the three (3) questions in a total of 300 words or less.

2) Choose one (1) way of sending your entry:

a) E-mail:

number1@inquirer.com.ph

b) Postal Mail:

Number 1 Promo
Marketing Department
Philippine Daily Inquirer
1098 Chino Roces Avenue
Corner Yague and Mascardo Streets
Makati City 1204

3) You may only send one (1) entry. In the event that you send more than one entry, Inquirer will honor your first entry. All other entries will be disqualified.

4) Include the following information in your entry:
a) Full name
b) Residential address
c) Landline number
d) Mobile number
e) Date of birth

5) Philippine Daily Inquirer will accept entries from 12:01 AM of December 9, 2007 to 11:59 PM of January 9, 2008 only.

6) As Philippine Daily Inquirer is on its 22nd year, twenty-two (22) best entries will be chosen by a panel of Inquirer editors and executives.

7) Winners will be announced in Inquirer on January 22, and notified through postal mail.

8) Winners must present at least one (1) valid ID with photo (school, company, government) and the notification from the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

9) Prizes can be claimed at the Philippine Daily Inquirer head office.

10) Taxes will be paid by the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

11) Prizes not claimed within sixty (60) days from receipt of notification will be forfeited in favor of the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

12) Winners shall agree to have their names and photos published in the newspaper or announced in any mode or manner of advertisement as the Philippine Daily Inquirer may deem appropriate.

13) In case of dispute, the Philippine Daily Inquirer's decision shall be final.

14) All employees of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, their relatives up to second degree of consanguinity or affinity, and of its advertising agency, are not allowed to participate in this promo.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
Room 201, Bonuan Apartelle
10 Happy Glen Loop, Baguio City
Tel. No. (074)443-9255
Fax No. (074)443-8971
E-mail: inq_baguio@inquirer.com.ph

SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU
2nd Floor, Los Baños Bldg.
Cor. Peñaranda and Aguinaldo Sts.
Legazpi City
Telefax No. (052) 480-4182
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com.ph

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

Website: www.inquirer.net/regions

Across the NATION

Text us your feedback: Inquirer atn name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) *Assistant Editor* **Tony Bergonia**

VISAYAS BUREAU
c/o Cebu Daily News
18-15 Escario St., Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032) 233-0346/233-0349
Fax No. (032) 232-9938
E-mail: inq_cebu@inquirer.com.ph

MINDANAO BUREAU
FEP Printing Corp. Bldg.
Ma-a Road, Davao City
Tel. No. (082)244-1770 to 71
Fax No. (082)244-1771
E-mail: inq_davao@inquirer.com.ph

US toxic waste victims get Panlilio help

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—FILIPINOS WHO claimed they were made ill by exposure to toxic wastes left by the United States military at the former Clark Air Base have found another ally in Pampanga Gov. Eddie Panlilio.

This happened as the People's Task Force for Bases Cleanup (PTFBC) signed a memorandum of agreement with Panlilio for a support program for victims during the group's general assembly at the Parish of the Lord's Resurrection at the Madapdap resettlement site in Mabalacat town on Friday.

Nelia Carreon, PTFBC-Clark coordinator, said she was surprised when she realized that Panlilio was the same priest who frequented the evacuation center at the Clark Air Base Command (Cabcom) in 1992 when Mt. Pinatubo's lahar swamped the northern villages of Mabalacat.

Previous role

Panlilio was then the executive director of the Archdiocese of San Fernando's Social Action Center of Pampanga that facilitated relief operations and livelihood projects for Cabcom evacuees.

Myrla Baldonado, PTFBC national coordinator, said more than 20,000 families who stayed at Cabcom until 1998 were exposed to the "deadly toxics."

The defunct Mount Pinatubo Commission had closed Cabcom that year to stop exposing people there to health risks.

The decision came after the Department of Health's National Poison Control found high levels of arsenic in the blood samples taken from 47 pairs of children and mothers, including Carreon.

These, Baldonado said, indicated that the water and soil at Cabcom were contaminated with heavy metals.

Seeing Panlilio, Carreon said: "We are very hopeful."

Baldonado and Panlilio said the support program would be finalized in January, but medical help, especially for those seriously ill, would be a priority.

300 deaths

Over 300 victims around Clark and Subic had died from mostly cancer since 1997. Of the more than 100 cases being monitored, the PTFBC helped only half of them on the assistance of some senators, local officials and private donors

"Cabcom was identi. l as a former motor pool of the United States Air Force. While US military guidance directs base commanders to report the environmental situation of closing bases to the next tenants, Cabcom's former use was not declared as a contaminated site," Baldonado said.

She said the Weston International report in 1997, which identified the presence of mercury in drinking water, was not reported to the evacuees or to agencies like the Department of Social Welfare and Development that administered Cabcom.

The PTFBC was formed in 1992 after the US General Accounting Office, the auditing arm of the US Congress, admitted "widespread contamination in the Clark and Subic bases" in a report.

"When you were transferred inside Clark, we thought that you would be safe. I was so sad to hear that you were doubly affected by the toxics left behind by the US bases," Panlilio told some 1,000 former Cabcom occupants.

He has designated a staffer in his office to work closely with the PTFBC in finalizing the support program. The provincial board, he said, will be consulted on the program. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

This 'Trillanes' packs power for New Year, but sale is banned

By Carmela Reyes
Inquirer Central Luzon

BOCAUE, BULACAN—IF THE Nov. 29 Peninsula Manila standoff led by detained Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV failed to make a noise, trust this "Trillanes" to supply the fireworks. Literally.

Some firecracker and pyrotechnic manuf :turers in this so-called firecracker capital of the Philippines have been secretly offering to patrons the "Trillanes," a stronger and louder type of product not found on display shelves of outlets here.

The "Trillanes," which appears like the "fountain" type product but packs more noise, is 12 inches long and 8.5 centimeters in diameter.

Namesake

Its manufacturers named the product after the senator and Navy official who led the Nov. 29 standoff at the Peninsula Manila hotel and the failed 2003 Oakwood mutiny, both in Makati City.

Its makers, however, label the product with the generic "Special" to avoid attracting attention, as it is a banned product. It retails at P250.

Regalado Reyes, 51, a resident of Quezon City, said he bought two pieces for the New Year revelry. He said a stall owner here informed him that they were selling the product.

He said the stall owner asked him not to use the product indoors and light it only in a vacant area away from people and residential areas.

Reyes said the "Trillanes" is being sold only to people looking for "stronger" products, like the banned firecrackers "Bin Laden Bomb" and "Goodbye Philippines."

Terror names

The "Bin Laden Bomb" firecracker, which was made here in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in the United States on Sept. 11, 2001, and the "Goodbye Philippines" are cheaper, at P150 to P200 apiece.

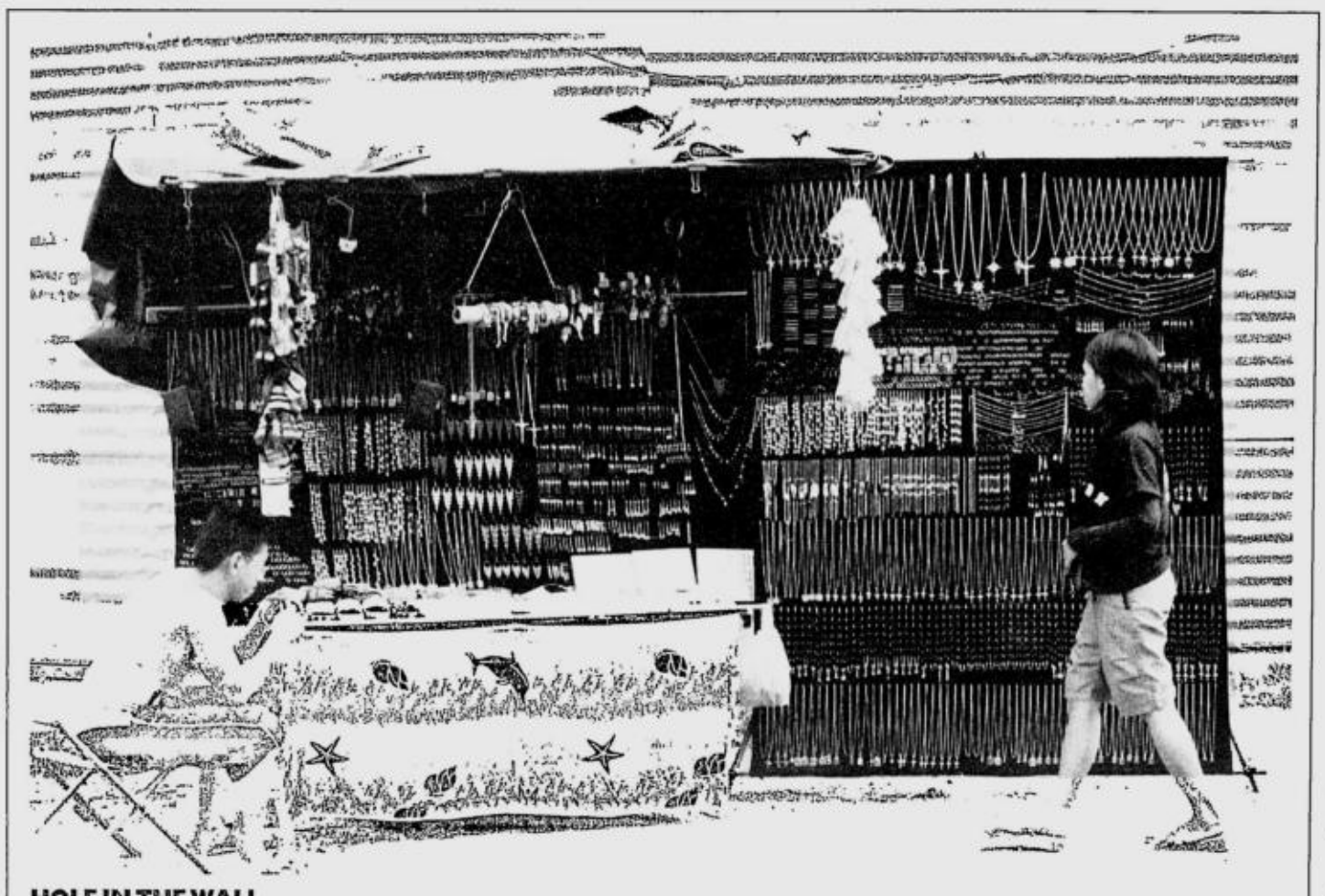
Celso Enriquez, owner of the Uni-Star Fireworks in Barangay Turo here, said the "Trillanes" is double the size of the "Bin Laden Bomb" and "Goodbye Philippines," which are the sizes of a canned soft drink.

Enriquez, however, clarified that he was not selling the "Trillanes" or any of the banned products. He said many unlicensed manufacturers trade in this type of firecracker.

He said policemen last week confiscated illegal products, including the "Bin Laden Bomb" and "Goodbye Philippines," so many customers were looking for other "extra strong" firecrackers.

This led some manufacturers to produce the "Trillanes" to satisfy the demand, he said.

"Many Filipinos want to try what is prohibited... they find thrill in doing what is considered forbidden—be it on food that you should not eat or a romantic affair," Enriquez said.



HOLE IN THE WALL
JEOFFREY MAITEM/INQUIRER MINDANAO
A stall selling necklaces and other fashion accessories emerges from a wall of GI sheets on a street in Koronadal City in South Cotabato.

Lucena 'boga' makers, buyers go underground

LUCENA CITY—A POLICE campaign has driven makers and buyers of a banned improvised noise-making device to go underground to continue the trade in what has come to be known as "boga," street lingo for gun.

A local boga maker, who talked on condition he not be identified for fear of getting caught, said he manufactures boga only when orders are placed for these.

He said fear of getting caught has forced him to stop preparing these devices ahead.

He said the prevailing prices of boga range from P400 to P600.

Boga is made out of PVC pipes. It gives out an explosion from methyl alcohol kept at the tail end of the pipes.

The alcohol content is shaken to create a vapor and a trigger made from disposable lighter is activated to produce a bang.

The use of the device has led to serious eye injuries in the past.

Supt. Ronaldo Genaro Ylagan, Lucena City police chief, has ordered policemen to patrol the city streets to prevent the illegal sale of firecrackers.

Guns of policemen in the city were also covered with tapes to prevent their use during the New Year celebration.

Gun-firing has led to deaths in previous New Year revelries. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Baguio flyover to open middle of January amid talk of anomalies

BAGUIO CITY—THE CONTROversial Baguio flyover will be opened to traffic middle of January next year, after being delayed for years by protesting environmentalists and city residents.

Construction work at the flyover stopped this year when funds ran out, but it resumed a month ago when the House of Representatives assured its contractor of fresh funding.

Former Mayors Braulio Yaranon and Virginia de Guia mounted a citizens' campaign to oppose the project, citing its potential hazard to the city's aquifer and for irregularities that went with its financing.

The project was originally designed as a vehicular underpass that would use only P44 million worth of savings from the modernization of Marcos Highway, Yaranon said.

The underpass proposal and the flyover were meant as support routes to ease traffic on Marcos Highway and Kennon Road, the major routes to and from the city.

Even President Macapagal-Arroyo, who is here for the holidays, was drawn into the controversy when she ordered its funds realigned instead to farm-to-market road projects and a cable car system in the Cordillera to help vegetable farmers haul their produce.

But Ms Arroyo later withdrew her instructions when she was advised that it was illegal to divert savings from a government loan. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

GMA 1st leader in La Union Rizal Day rites

SAN FERNANDO CITY—PRESIdent Macapagal-Arroyo on Sunday recorded a historic first in this city when she led the 111th Rizal Day celebration here.

"This is the first time that the President made the flag raising and wreath laying on the monument of (Dr. Jose) Rizal outside Metro Manila and Baguio," said Mayor Pablo Ortega.

It was also the first time that a Philippine president attended a Rizal Day celebration in La Union, according to Gov. Manuel Ortega.

"And this is a very great honor and historic for the province," he said.

Why San Fernando?

Ms Arroyo arrived here from Baguio City at 7:50 a.m. and was given arrival honors by Philippine Military Academy cadets. She then greeted local officials and heads of government agencies here.

After the flag-raising ceremony, Ms Arroyo, who was accompanied by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., laid a wreath at the foot of the Rizal monument in front of the City Hall here.

Mayor Ortega said nobody knew why Ms Arroyo decided to attend the Rizal Day celebration here.

"I asked the President's staff why she chose San Fernando. They said she just decided that she wanted to do the wreath laying and flag raising here," he said in Filipino.

Rush job

Despite the short notice, Mayor Ortega said they were happy that the celebration was held here. "We had to work 48 hours *para mapaganda natin yong* plaza *natin, mapinturahan yong estatwa* (to beautify our plaza, had the statue painted)," Mayor Ortega said.

"The result was good and we were told the President was happy," he said.

Governor Ortega said Ms Arroyo did not deliver a speech because she was in a hurry to return to Baguio "for another engagement."

"But then, *ang* message *lang naman diyan, e,* (the only message there is) let us emulate Jose Rizal so that our nation will move forward," he said.

The last time Ms Arroyo delivered a Rizal Day speech was in Baguio City in 2002, when she announced that she would not run in the 2004 presidential election to foster unity in the country.

Ten months later, however, Ms Arroyo declared before an assembly of senior citizens at the Expo Pilipino in Pampanga that she would run for president in the following year's elections.

After the ceremony on Sunday, Ms Arroyo went to the La Union provincial capitol to have breakfast with local officials.

"We did not talk about politics. We are on vacation, we are on a holiday, so, no politics," said Governor Ortega.

"*Malayo pa naman ang eleksyon, e,* 2010 *pa yan* (The elections is still years away). So, it's too early to be politicking. Our drive now is to preserve and do what is necessary for the country and for our province of La Union," he said.

"She did not also promise anything but she said she wanted that our international airport here will be completed," said Mayor Ortega.

In Baguio City, leaders of a sect that worships Rizal gathered at Rizal Park in the city at 7 a.m., hoping to meet Ms Arroyo.

Apolonio Soriano of the Iglesia Pilipino Katolika Pilipinas Luma at Bagong Henerasyon said they visited the park during the times Ms Arroyo led the Rizal Day celebration in Baguio.

Eusebius Aviles, one of the church's elders, said they call themselves "*alipin ng diyos na si* Rizal (servants or slaves of god Rizal)," and have been preaching the national hero's mystical origins for decades at a small community here. *Reports from Gabriel Cardinoza, Vincent Cabreza and Desiree Caluza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

MS ARROYO during the flag-raising ceremony at the celebration of the 111th anniversary of the martyrdom of Dr. Jose Rizal in San Fernando, La Union. LYN RILLON

Talk of US intervention prompts Sulu meetings

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A US military spokesperson denied reports that American soldiers in Panamao town in Sulu have been preventing health workers from operating the district hospital there at night.

Dr. Silak Lakkian, Panamao District Hospital chief, earlier said the American soldiers—led by a MSgt. Ronburg—have started implementing the order on Nov. 30 without offering any reason.

She said a team of soldiers barged into the hospital, which is some 45 kilometers from here, on Nov. 30 and told the chief nurse to close it not later than 6 p.m.

AMERICAN soldiers mingle with Filipino troopers in Panamao, Sulu. The town is considered a high-risk area for US forces following clashes in the past between government soldiers and followers of MNLF leader Habier Malik. JULIE S. ALIPALA/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Threats

Lakkian said the American soldiers had threatened to shoot anybody seen inside the hospital's premises after that time.

But Lt. Commander Melissa Scheurmann, the public affairs officer of the Joint Special Operations Task Force Philippines based in this city, denied the report.

"All those (pieces of) information are pure allegations and that allegation is not true," she said.

She said Sulu Gov. Abdusakur Tan has ordered an investigation of the report.

Scheurmann also said she still has to look into reports quoting a soldier named MSgt. Ronburg.

"Personally, I don't know, I still have to look into that and that name is unfamiliar," she said.

Summoned

On Saturday, Hadja Jainab Abdulmajid, Sulu disaster coordinator, said Governor Tan has called on Lakkian and a certain Major Walker for a meeting.

"*Andito sila ngayon, gusto kasi ni* governor *na magkaroon ng harap-harapan na usapan at ma*-thresh out *itong problema* (They're here now because the governor wants a face-to-face meeting and for this problem to be threshed out)," Abdulmajid said.

"She is consistent in her position. In fact, she again mentioned the name of Ronburg and reported it to his superior, Major Walker, especially the shoot to kill order," Abdulmajid said, adding that it was unlikely for Lakkian to invent stories.

"Lakkian is one of the respected health officials in the province," Abdulmajid said.

Embassy words

Rebecca Thompson, spokesperson of the US Embassy in Manila, said "the US government has had no role in any discussions or decision about the opening hours of the Panamao District Hospital."

"US soldiers have not been involved in keeping the hospital closed or open," Thompson said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

Lakkian said she was really surprised about the order.

"I thought these Americans are here for humanitarian purposes. Our hospital caters to all the indigents in the town who cannot afford the transportation expense to the Sulu Provincial Hospital," she said.

Lakkian said they found that the American soldiers were serious when they tried to turn off the generator set in the evening of Dec. 2.

She said she got a call from Ronburg asking her to turn off the generator.

American orders

"My two staffers were instructed by phone to get through the kitchen door to the genset with their left hands on their heads. After they were able to put off the genset, they were instructed to get back immediately," Lakkian, who was at the hospital at that time, said.

Lakkian said in the morning, she immediately went to Panamao Mayor Abdugafur Abdurajak "because I could not bear it anymore."

"It is useless to stay here because we cannot do anything," she said.

As of Friday evening, the hospital remained close at night as staffers are afraid to defy the order, Lakkian said. *Julie S. Alipala with reports from Ed General, Inquirer Mindanao*

Justice eludes kin of former vice mayor 1 yr after his slay

ROXAS CITY—THE WIDOW OF former Tapaz Vice Mayor Victor Gardose yesterday lamented that justice remained elusive exactly a year ago yesterday since the former town official and his two companions were gunned down.

Gardose's widow, Rosemarie, despite her now being the incumbent mayor of Tapaz, lamented that the family was still nowhere near finding the mastermind of the murder of her husband and his two companions, Carida village chief Leonardo Gemino and the vice mayor's bodyguard Anton Gequillo.

The late vice mayor, Gemino and Gequillo were about to attend the coronation of a fiesta queen of Barangay Taft on Dec. 30, 2006, when three unidentified armed men shot them outside the barangay hall.

So far, only one suspect, Noel Fuentespina, has been charged with multiple murder in a case now pending at the Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 20 in Mambusao, Capiz.

At large

But Fuentespina, the driver of former Capiz provincial board member Ronald Exmundo, has remained at large.

Witnesses also identified a Manuel "Boy" Beanisa, 44, as a possible suspect in the murders. He has not been charged.

Beanisa, a frustrated murder suspect who escaped from the Capiz provincial jail in 1985, was arrested in Manila last July and is now held at the Capiz Rehabilitation Center due to several pending cases not related to the Gardose murder.

Beanisa has denied any involvement in the Gardose murder.

Until Fuentespina is arrested, no one would know for sure who masterminded the killings, police had earlier said.

Mayor Gardose, for her part, said that she and the families of Gemino and Gequillo would just continue to hope that the truth would eventually come out and justice would prevail.

Politics

The mayor said she would organize a first death anniversary commemoration rites for her late husband, Gemino and Gequillo on Jan. 19, 2008, so that their town mates would not forget that justice has not yet been found.

Mayor Gardose said she believed that the killing of her husband, who was planning to run for town mayor before he was killed, was politically motivated.

Mrs. Gardose eventually decided to run for mayor and won. *Felipe V. Celino, Inquirer Visayas*

LUCKY OBJECTS NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Fruit vendors in Legazpi City take advantage of an expected surge in the sale of round fruits as many Filipinos cling to the belief that such objects could bring good luck in the New Year.

NPAs wound Marine in Palawan town ambush

PUERTO PRINCESA—SUSPECTED New People's Army (NPA) rebels ambushed the 29th Marine Company in Taytay town in Palawan and wounded one of the Marines while a member of the barangay council was shot dead in a separate attack by the rebels in Panganiban town in Catanduanes, reports said yesterday.

The Marine was wounded after the NPA rebels ambushed a military convoy along a main road in Taytay town Saturday night.

The attack happened barely two weeks after ranking military officials declared stepped up offensives against communist rebels who killed three Marines in an ambuscade in the nearby town of San Vicente last Dec. 16.

Senior Supt. Dennis Peña, Palawan police director, declined to give the identity of the wounded soldier, who reportedly suffered "superficial wounds," in deference to military protocol.

In Catanduanes, a member of the barangay council was shot dead by suspected NPA members Saturday night in Panganiban town, some 56 kilometers from the capital town of Virac.

Senior Supt. Francisco B. Peñaflor Jr. identified the slain barangay official as Santos Soler, 50, resident of the coastal village of Cagdarao located 10 km away from the town proper.

Geraldford Ticke, Marlon Ramos and Fernan Gianan, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Slain Davao City broadcaster buried

DAVAO CITY—MURDERED broadcaster Ferdie Lintuan was buried yesterday.

His killing was not likely to be solved soon despite the arrest of a suspect.

Jan Marc Lintuan, 20, the eldest son of the broadcaster, refused to comment on the arrest of 31-year-old suspect Oliver Antoc, whom police tagged as the gunman.

"The case is not solved until the mastermind is identified," the younger Lintuan told the INQUIRER.

Antoc was buying roasted chicken in La Verna Hills Subdivision when arrested by police.

In a lineup, two witnesses pointed to Antoc as the alleged gunman, but a third witness contradicted the two.

Lintuan was gunned down Dec. 24, shortly after leaving dxGO radio station on R. Castillo Street. He bought block time in the radio station for his program in which he had criticized Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte.

Lucio Ceniza, a fellow broadcaster who was with Lintuan in his car during the attack, said an official from the Department of Justice called him to say that one of the key witnesses could not positively identify Antoc as the gunman.

"It's not yet certain if indeed the arrested person was the real culprit," Ceniza said.

Dante Jimenez, chair of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption, a civic group, said he had a meeting with Chief Supt. Andres Caro, Southern Mindanao police chief, and advised authorities to "be cautious not to be intimidated by political pressures."

"It must be a solid case so that it can withstand court proceedings," Jimenez said.

He said he has received a death threat through text message telling him to keep off the Lintuan case. *Dennis Jay Santos, Rizalene Acac and Joselle Badilla, Inquirer Mindanao*

FERDIE Lintuan's eldest son reads an eulogy for his father as the murdered broadcaster's remains are buried at a memorial park in Davao City. BING GONZALES/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Mayor prepares suit vs actress in custody war over love child

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—PULUPANdan Mayor Magdaleno Peña on Friday said he would file four criminal cases against his former live-in partner, Marie Roxanne "Plinky" Recto, and her lawyer for showing the picture of his 3-year-old son and naming him on TV.

Peña said the act of Recto and her lawyer, Evalyn Ursua, in exposing his son on national TV endangers the boy's life. He said he would file the cases at the regional trial court either in Manila or in Negros Occidental.

But Ursua said Peña is "just desperate."

Diversion

"Peña knows that his having gone into hiding is in violation of the Supreme Court and he is trying to divert attention away from it. It is a classic tactic," Ursua said.

On Dec. 3, the SC ordered Peña to turn over the child to Recto pending appeal. The SC has yet to rule on where the custody trial for the child would be held.

Peña has refused to turn over the boy, saying his son is in danger of being kidnapped by the New People's Army (NPA) if he is in the custody of Recto.

He has survived an ambush by the NPA last May 30. The NPA missed him, but killed his bodyguards. The guerrillas said there would always be a next time.

TV exposure

Peña said the showing of the face of the boy and naming him on national TV is in violation of Republic Act No. 9262 (Anti Violence Against Women and Children Act), the Custody Law, the Child and Youth Welfare Code and the Revised Penal Code, which carries a penalty of about 20 years imprisonment each for Recto and Ursua.

"They did not find the child by showing his picture on national TV because we are abroad. I am so irked by Ursua's exposing my son to the danger of kidnapping. I am seriously considering leaving him with my friends abroad for his safety and go home by myself," Peña said.

He said he is on leave as mayor of Pulupandan until Jan. 17 in order to protect his son.

Peña also explained that a continued stay with him would not endanger his son since he has ample security provided by the Army and police.

Filipino healing priest does so 'many miracles'

From page A1

continues to amaze, baffle and bring hope and joy through his ministry that has seen the healing of countless sick and infirm in many parts of the world, including the Philippines.

"It is not me," he says casually. He is convinced that he is just a channel for God's healing power.

The soft-spoken Suarez, a 2007 TOYM (The Outstanding Young Men) awardee for religious service, projects an ordinariness that is both pleasant and endearing. His boyish looks do not easily reveal "what God has wrought" through him. He does not have an electrifying aura nor does he shriek and shout to slay evil elements like some Bible-thumping televangelists do. Suarez goes about it gently, in his own soothing way, touching, praying over people, pleading for healing. And because he wants everything centered in the Eucharist, he always begins with a Holy Mass.

Like in the Bible

Miraculous healing continues to happen. People who have been assisting him for some time have witnessed the impossible.

Businessman Greg Monteclaro of Couples for Christ-Gawad Kalinga has seen it all. "Except the raising of the dead," he says. "But the deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk—all that is told in the Bible—I have seen it happen."

In Bulacan, Monteclaro narrates, there was this young boy who was born with practically no bones. "He was soft—like jellyfish. I was holding him in my arms when Father Suarez prayed over him. I myself felt the bones grow inside the boy's body and suddenly there he was—walking."

How does one explain that?

"My own problem here is that I have seen so many miracles, it has become so common to me," Monteclaro says.

Not that he is complaining.

Journalist and documentalist Bernardo Lopez has his own share of miracle stories to tell and he continues to use his video camera to capture moments that he hopes would convince many of what God is doing through Suarez. He has avidly followed the priest and has uploaded images on YouTube which have been getting thousands of hits.

Boy from Butong

Born in 1967 (he turns 41 in February) in Barrio Butong in Taal, Batangas, Suarez grew up like most boys. (Taal's antique basilica is touted as the biggest in the Far East. It is also known for the miraculous Virgin of Caysasay.)

His father, Cervando, drove a tricycle and his mother, the former Azucena Mortel, was a seamstress. The eldest of four children (he has a sister and two brothers), he attended public schools.

"We weren't a particularly religious family," he says. "Our family attended Mass maybe three times a year."

At an early age, Suarez already knew how to earn a living. At 12 he rented out inflatables at Butong beach.

Healing at 16

Something happened when Suarez was 16. He came upon a paralyzed woman and took pity on her. "*Naawa lang ako* (I took pity on her)." He found himself praying over her and suddenly the woman was walking. He did not know what to make of it and did not talk about it much. It must have been discomfiting to a lad his age. Looking back, it all seemed so natural. But at that time, announcing it to the world was far from Suarez's mind.

What was beginning to concern him was the call to the priesthood or religious life. "I didn't respond. I didn't know a priest." How, where, when? He was waiting for cues and signs, but until they came, he just lived one day at a time, pursuing what needed to be done. He kept the call to himself, nurtured it "*until lumago* (it flourished)."

Going to the seminary was not an immediate option. Suarez went to Manila and graduated with a chemical engineering degree at Adamson University which is run by the Vincentian Fathers.

Mary appears

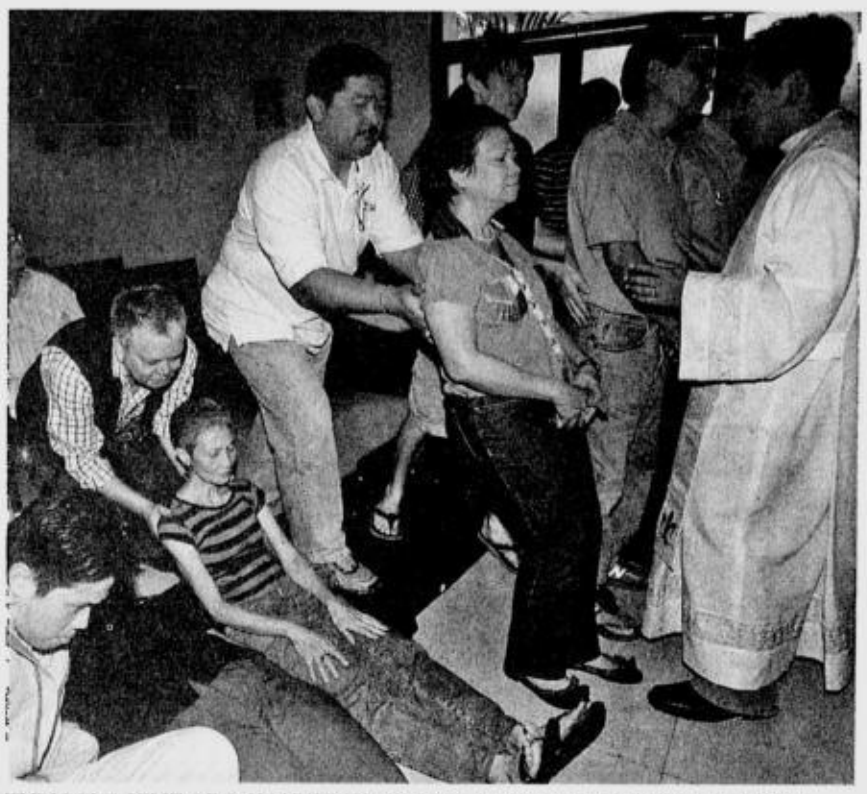
After college, Suarez entered the Franciscan Order (Conventuals). "After one-and-a-half years, I left. Then I joined the SVD (Society of the Divine Word) but I was asked to leave after six months."

It was there, at the SVD Christ the King Seminary that, Suarez says, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to him. "She told me that I would go to a far away place which was cold and windy, and there proclaim the word of God."

Suarez was in his late 20s when he met a French-Canadian student and tourist named Mark Morin who invited him to Canada and even paid for his fare. They could have been partners in a business venture but Suarez wanted to pursue the priesthood. That was 1996.

He again tried the Diocese of Winnipeg to study as a diocesan priest but again, it did not work out and he was made to leave.

"I was an expensive venture, they said," he says, chuckling. "They'd have to spend four-and-a-half years on me." They preferred already ordained Filipino diocesan priests who were seeking a life abroad.



TYPICAL SCENE OF A SUAREZ SESSION Believers are slain by the Spirit, the "deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk ... I have seen so many miracles...," says an eyewitness. PDI PHOTO FILE

Companions of the Cross

And then he met priests of the Companions of the Cross (a Canadian congregation founded in the 1980s) and here he has stayed since. Because he had had previous religious formation and studies in philosophy and theology, it did not take long for Suarez to be ordained.

"I was ordained in 2002 when I was 35," he says, "and I am the only one who was assigned to go worldwide soon after ordination."

His superiors were aware of and recognized his gift and set him free to reach out to the world.

"I was nonchalant about all these. There was no pressure. I acted upon obedience and not on what I wanted. Remember, I had kept this gift for 20 years," he says.

Abroad

Suarez's gift of healing first became known abroad and only later in the Philippines. He has visited many countries, some of them poor, like Uganda where he walked among refugees, orphans, people sick with AIDS, malaria and yellow fever and afflicted with evil spirits.

Fr. Jeff Shannon who accompanies Suarez on his trips recalls their bout with restless orphaned girls in Uganda.

"As they approached us for prayer after the Mass, they rested in the Spirit for hours, then cried, wailed and screamed as the Holy Spirit moved in to free and to heal [them]. After three hours of struggle they were delivered and they became as peaceful as doves, full of love. As they sang and danced their way back to their residence, they witnessed their dormitory light up inside, even though it was late at night and there was no electricity. One girl was healed of blindness."

Miracle stories are recorded in the newsletter of Mary Mother or the Poor-Healing Ministry, a foundation Suarez established to help the suffering poor.

Mary Mother of the Poor

Eight years ago, while praying, Suarez had a vision where he saw Jesus pouring on graces upon him. He also saw poor children asking for help. He couldn't understand the vision's meaning at that time.

During a visit to the Philippines some years ago, 10 poor children approached him to ask for support for their studies. Suarez sent them money and as time went by, more support came from friends who shared his vision. Support came from Austria, Canada, USA, Germany, Japan, Italy, England, Switzerland, Uganda and the Philippines. This gave rise to the Mary Mother of the Poor Foundation (MMP) which aims to help the poor through better shelter, counseling and other programs, by coordinating with health and social services in order to help the sick and the aging, by teaching the tenets of the Catholic faith and by providing programs to help the youth become good citizens.

As high as Statue of Liberty

Soon to become the center of Suarez's healing ministry is Montemaria (Matuko Point) in the outskirts of Batangas City. Set on a hill on 20 hectares of land, the center of the Oratory of the Blessed Virgin at Montemaria will have chapels, prayer gardens, Stations of the Cross, retreat houses, campsites, lodging houses, a center for the poor and even a replica of Mary house in Ephesus (ancient city in Turkey). The place is meant to draw pilgrims who want to renew their faith.

The Montemaria centerpiece is the 33-story-high statue of Mary Mother of the Poor which will be about as high as the Statue of Liberty and higher than Christ the Redeemer of Brazil. It will face the sea between Batangas and Mindoro, known to be one of the world's richest in marine biodiversity.

The scale model was unveiled last August with Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales and Lipa Archbishop Ramon Arguelles in attendance.

There are claims that the stones on Montemaria have caused healing for the sick and people have started going to the place to find out for themselves.

40-hour-vigil Jan. 11-13

Nestor Mangio, one of the architects and an avid supporter of Suarez, says the oratory is scheduled to be finished in September 2008. The project is not wanting in donors. In July, the Companions of the Cross, the congregation to which Suarez belongs, will put up a foundation in the Philippines.

A 40-hour vigil is scheduled from Jan. 11-13 and pilgrims are expected to come in droves. Suarez will be there.

And how does the healing priest relax? "I do sports, I love nature, I love talking to people. I read the spiritual classics—St. Augustine, Francis de Sales. I also like Thomas Merton," he says.

Has the surge of the crowds affected him? "*Wala sa akin 'yun*. (That's nothing to me.)" He thinks people can easily approach him because "I am not threatening." After Mass, he says, he prays and "this saves me."

"I would like to think that after I've passed through this world, I'd have made a dent."

For now, the words of Jesus to the suffering are enough to inspire him. "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28).

(For more info visit www.fatherfernando.com or www.montemariashrine.com.)

Pray for, be kind to all God's animals, Church urged

From page A1

their meat consumption during the holidays, not just for health reasons but also out of compassion for animals that are cruelly slaughtered for the traditional media noche (midnight meal) feast.

The beef, pork or chicken they're enjoying had their "throats slit, limbs hacked off and skin torn from their bodies while still conscious. Pigs were plunged into vats of scalding water for hair removal while still conscious and chickens were scalded alive in feather-removal tanks," says Rochelle Regodon, campaigns manager of Peta-Asia Pacific.

They should also reduce, if not totally forego, the use of ear-splitting firecrackers to avoid stressing their pets. A dog's hearing—as well as a cat's—is 10 times more sensitive than a human's.

Violent places on earth

Peta says slaughterhouses are among "the most violent places on Earth ... it's ironic that the celebration of the [birth] of the Son of God is a feast of slaughtered pigs, cows, chicken and animal flesh."

"In Jesus' time, animal sacrifice was largely an excuse for people to eat animal flesh, and Jesus challenged the practice at every turn. He drove the merchants selling animals for sacrifice and consumption from the temple, instituted baptism in place of animal sacrifice, saying that God 'requires mercy, not sacrifice.' He also rejected both animal flesh and sacrifice at the Last Supper—a vegetarian Passover meal," notes Regodon.

Ramona Eliza T. Consunji, external affairs officer of the Animal Welfare Coalition, says that there are "references on the rights and welfare of animals found in the Bible. The connection between cruelty to animals and desensitized men are clearly defined in the Bible."

She cites Proverbs 12:10 which says: "A good man takes care of his animals, but wicked men are cruel to theirs."

Pray for animals

For her part, Nita Hontiveros Lichauco, president of PAWS, has this to say: "The secret to real and lasting peace is staring us in the face ... Simply let the animals into our lives. It is what the natural law dictates—humans and animals are co-beneficiaries of this world."

How do humans let animals into their inner sanctum?

"One great way is to pray for them daily," Lichauco says.

Another is "to officially include them in church prayers, not only in October (when World Animal Day is celebrated) but also during New Year's Eve ceremonies. Then watch and see true and lasting peace expand in homes, in our lives, in our country, in the world," she says.

Consunji adds: "Preaching about love and forgiveness for one's neighbor without teaching respect for all creatures is hypocritical."

Gluttonous proportions

"Ironically, there is no other season which exploits animals more than on the very month that Jesus was born. We continue the feast as we usher in the New Year, to gluttonous proportions," says Regodon. "Wouldn't it be better if food on the table wasn't result of cruelty and abuse?"

Peta explains that animals raised for food are subjected to violent, painful procedures such as de-horning, de-beaking, and castration, all of which are done without anesthesia.

"In order to maximize profits, factory farmers confine animals to spaces so small they can barely turn around," Regodon says. "Many never see the light of day or feel soil or grass beneath their feet. When they have reached the end of their brief growth cycles (artificially accelerated by drugs), they are trucked away to their deaths."

Free vegetarian kit

"Our intention is to raise awareness on behalf of God's creatures and to make the world a more merciful place. We want to put a stop to animal abuse and foster compassion toward all creatures by encouraging the adoption of a vegetarian diet. This is entirely in keeping with the most cherished ideals of people of faith," Regodon says.

Peta is encouraging those who want to give up meat to visit www.PETAAsiaPacific.com for a free vegetarian starter kit which is loaded with information, tips and recipes.

"Please consider exploring veganism, the only diet that is compassionate and respectful of all God's creation. To find out more, visit www.jesusveg.com," adds Regodon.

Solving world hunger

In his book "Diet for a Small Planet," Frances Moore Lappe wrote that the feed cost of an eight-ounce steak is equivalent to a full cup of cooked cereal grains for 45 to 50 people. The 4.8 pounds of grain fed to cattle to produce one pound of beef for human beings represents a colossal waste of resources in a world still teeming with people who suffer from profound hunger and malnutrition.

According to the British group Vegfam (a famine relief charity organization which believes in vegetarianism), a 10-acre farm can support 60 people growing soybeans, 24 people growing wheat, 10 people growing corn but only two producing cattle.

According to Food Revolution author John Robbins, "under even the best of circumstances ... a meat-based diet is incredibly wasteful of the resources and inputs that make food production possible. If we are serious about creating a thriving, just and sustainable way of life for all, it is imperative that we shift to a plant-based diet."

Physician and author Dean Ornish M.D., who developed the Ornish Diet, specifically formulated to reverse heart disease, recommends a vegetarian diet together with exercise, meditation, an emotional support group and no smoking.

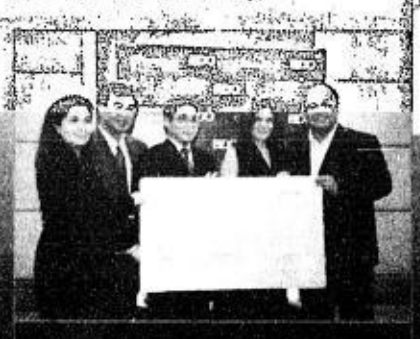
Tips for an animal-friendly New Year celebration

- KEEP YOUR COMPANION ANIMALS indoors and in a familiar room, with sufficient food and water. Frightened animals comfort themselves by hiding under a bed or in a closet, so owners are advised not to force their pets to come out until after the New Year noise has died down. Make sure the room is safe, the curtains are drawn and windows and doors are closed.
- Play soothing music to keep them calm.
- Take your dogs for a walk before the celebrations begin on New Year's Eve to tire them out so they would sleep through the noise from firecrackers going off.
- Don't light firecrackers near an animal shelter or a zoo. Animals in caged environments are already unsettled because of their unnatural surroundings. Noise and smoke would cause them to panic, and they could hurt themselves. Also, the pollution caused by firecrackers could be harmful for the animals.
- If you are going away for the holidays, take your animal companions with you or leave them with someone who is sensitive to their needs and will keep them safe. Never leave them alone while you are away.
- If your animal companions are prone to anxiety, talk to your vet. They may be able to prescribe something to help keep them calm. It's a good idea to move your companion animal's sleeping area closer to you to boost its confidence during this stressful time.
- Don't forget the dogs and cats who have made homes in your neighborhood. Lure them into safe areas with food and keep them there. Allow them to use your garage or shed for a few days to keep them away from harm.
- If you see children tying a firecracker to an animal's tail or throwing a firecracker at an animal, stop them immediately!
- If your building has security guards, tell them to keep an eye out for animals in distress and to inform you immediately. If you see animals who seem lost or confused, lure them to a safe place with food and water. Give them refuge in your home or bring them to a local shelter until their owners can be found.
- Instead of lighting a firecracker, light your home with lamps, candles or other decorative ornaments that are friendly to the environment and to animals.

A SPECTACULAR YEAR FOR SMART INFINITY

Oct. 17 - 18 - SMART Infinity offered its subscribers a once-in-a-lifetime chance to watch international baritone Josh Groban in a special concert held at the PICC Plenary Hall.

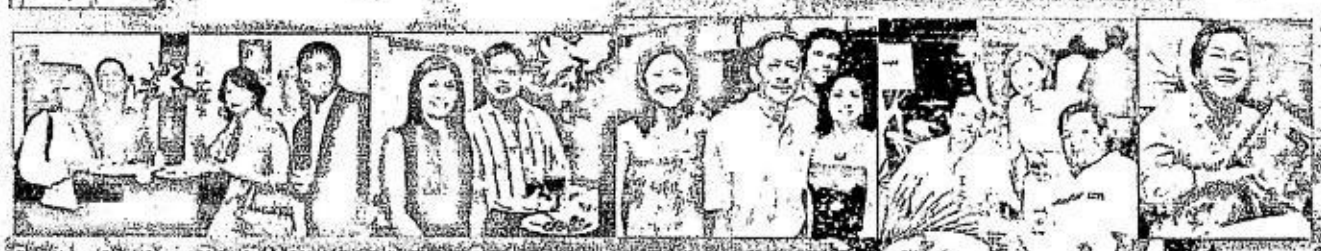
Jan. 20 - Classical Opera group, Il Divo, performed at the PICC Plenary Hall before an appreciative audience of Smart Infinity subscribers and special guests.



Aug. 9 - The Infinity Privilege Card was launched in partnership with BDO Platinum MasterCard offering special premium privileges to its subscribers. The event was held at the Rizal Ballroom of the Makati Shangri-la Hotel.

SMART Infinity, the premiere post-paid service of Smart Communications, Inc. (SMART), truly shone this year with a host of exclusive treats and events for its privileged subscribers. "We are proud to report that SMART Infinity was able to live up to its thrust of giving only the best to its customers," said SMART Infinity head, Julie Carceller. Here are the highlights of the past year:

May 21 - Mercedes Benz and CATS Motors, Inc., in partnership with SMART Infinity held an exclusive golf tournament for a hundred select Mercedes Benz owners and special guests at the Sta. Elena Golf and Country Club in Cabuyao, Laguna.



Nov. 29 - Rositi Jewels, Infinity Privilege Card partner of SMART Infinity, hosted a special dinner for choice Rositi clients showcasing both Rositi Jewelry and Smart Infinity privileges. The event was held at Rositi Jewels showroom Makati.

Nov. 27 - SMART Infinity and Johnny Litton hosted a special dinner for the Chinese community at Fireplace Restaurant, at the Hyatt Hotel Manila. The night involved a special presentation introducing Infinity privileges, entertainment and was capped with a special raffle.

A SPECTACULAR

YEAR

SMART Infinity, the premiere post-paid service of Smart Communications, Inc. (SMART), truly shone this year with a host of exclusive treats and events for its privileged subscribers. "We are proud to report that SMART Infinity was able to live up to its thrust of giving only the best to its customers," said SMART Infinity head, Julie Caneller. Here are the highlights of the past year.

Nov. 29 - Rositi Jewels, Infinity Privilege Card partner of SMART Infinity, hosted a special dinner for choice Rositi clients showcasing both Rositi Jewelry and Smart Infinity privileges. The event was held at Rositi Jewels showroom Makati.

Nov. 27 - SMART Infinity and Johnny Litton hosted a special dinner for the Chinese community at Fireplace Restaurant, at the Hyatt Hotel Manila. The night involved a special presentation introducing Infinity privileges, entertainment and was capped with a special raffle.

FOR SMART INFINITY

RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

Aplus METRO
Website: www.inquirer.net/metro
Editor Ester G. Dipasupil
Text us your feedback: inquirer met name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

MMDA looking for a few good men

4,000 posts vacant as 3,510 workers opt for early retirement

By DJ Yap

GOOD TIDINGS FOR UNEMPLOYED FILIPINOS IN THE COMING year: Thousands of job vacancies have just opened up at the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

Up to 4,000 positions are up for grabs at the MMDA as the agency seeks to fill up vacancies left by employees who opted for early retirement, MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said yesterday.

Some 500 of the vacant posts are for traffic enforcers who will supplement the agency's 2,000-strong traffic workforce, not including deputized enforcers employed by local governments, he added.

The MMDA is also looking for college graduates with degrees in mechanical engineering or architecture. Other positions available are operators of cranes and other heavy equipment, mechanics, welders, drivers, gardeners and carpenters.

According to Fernando, the prospective new hires are expected to perform tasks in line with the MMDA's programs, including its ambitious "Metro Gwapo" beautification project, among others.

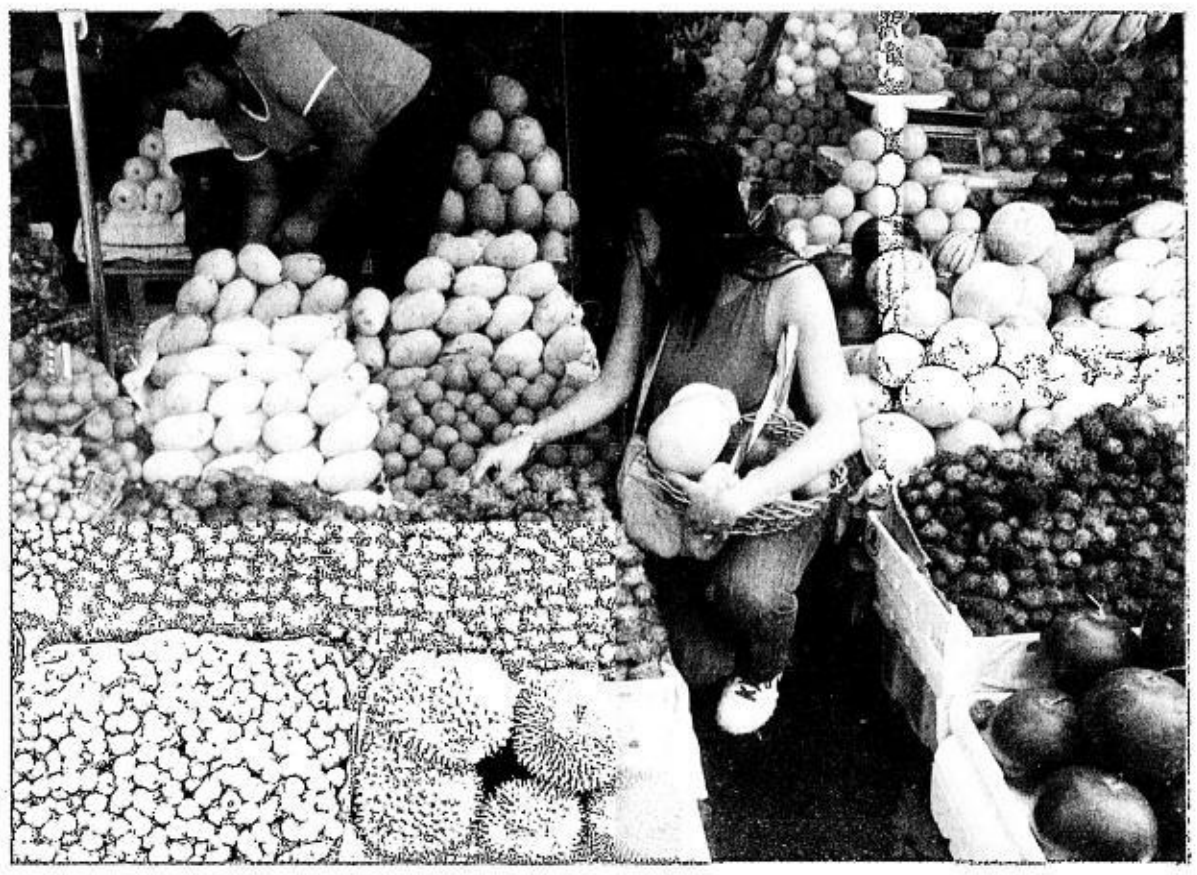
Those interested in the traffic enforcer position should have two years of college education and a height of at least 5'4" for women and 5'6" for men, the MMDA chair said.

Fernando urged job seekers to apply for the positions as soon as possible to ensure sufficient manpower for the agency.

This year, 3,510 MMDA employees filed for early retirement, drastically reducing the 9,000-strong workforce. Their jobs ranged from office clerks to street sweepers and traffic aides.

Of those who opted to retire early, almost 2,000 have been issued "stop working" notices since Oct. 31. The rest have been allowed to extend their term till today, the last day of the year.

The early retirement option was offered to MMDA employees in line with the government's rationalization program.



LUCKY FRUITS
A woman at a market in Malate, Manila, fills her basket with round and not-so-round fruits for New Year's Eve. RYAN LIM

Car thieves strike in QC, make off with van, SUV

By Jeannette I. Andrade

CAR THIEVES STRUCK TWICE YESTERDAY in Quezon City, taking a van and a sport utility vehicle and leaving one of their victims injured.

Ronald Bantog was brought to the East Avenue Medical Center for a deep cut in the right eyebrow after the thieves made off with his white Toyota Grandia van with special license plate RVF 08.

Based on reports from the Quezon City Police District, Bantog was parked in front of a supermarket on Congressional Avenue in Project 8 at around 2 a.m. yesterday when three armed men wearing bonnets alighted from a white Honda Civic and approached him.

The police said the suspects hit Bantog in the head with the butt of a high-powered firearm and took over the wheel of his van. They brought along Bantog, left him on Road 1 near the corner of Visayas Avenue in Project 6 and then drove away.

Policemen on board a patrol car chanced upon the victim and brought him to the hospital.

Almost seven hours later, three men on board a red motorcycle stole a white Toyota Rav-4 (ZJV 336) which was parked at the corner of Retiro Street and D. Tuazon Avenue in Sta. Mesa Heights.

The vehicle was recovered two hours later at the corner of Cordillera and Sgt. O. M. Alcaraz Streets in La Loma.

Witnesses said the men on board the vehicle abandoned it and escaped on a motorcycle which they had commandeered.

Experts offer tips on keeping pets calm on New Year's Eve

By Marlet D. Salazar
Contributor

AMID THE EXCITEMENT AND FESTIVITIES on New Year's Eve, many people often forget that not everyone enjoys the use of firecrackers to greet the coming year, especially animals.

Dr. Nick Carpio of the Vets in Practice Clinic in Mandaluyong City has advised pet owners to take the necessary steps to keep their furry companions calm and safe during the merrymaking.

"It would be best if the animals are placed in a room as far away as possible from the streets to at least minimize the loud noise" created by firecrackers, he said.

There are also medication that owners can give their pets hours before the festivities start to keep them calm, he added.

For example, there's Calmivet which makes dogs a little drowsy. There's also the herbal-based Pet Relaxant.

But Carpio advised people to consult a veterinarian before dispensing any medicine to animals "because they might give the dosage intended for humans which could be dangerous."

For those who prefer the natural approach, the veterinarian has this suggestion: "Massage lavender oil on your pet's head and light a lavender candle or incense which gives a soothing effect."

The lights in the house can also be dimmed to create a calming atmosphere. With a lighted candle or incense in the room, however, people should constantly check on their pets or stay with them just to make sure that no fires break out, Carpio said.

Joey Tiosayco, president of Lovepets.com, an animal welfare group, also offered several tips.

Cats, for example, can be placed in cages because when they are frightened, they get disoriented and might flee from the house, he said.

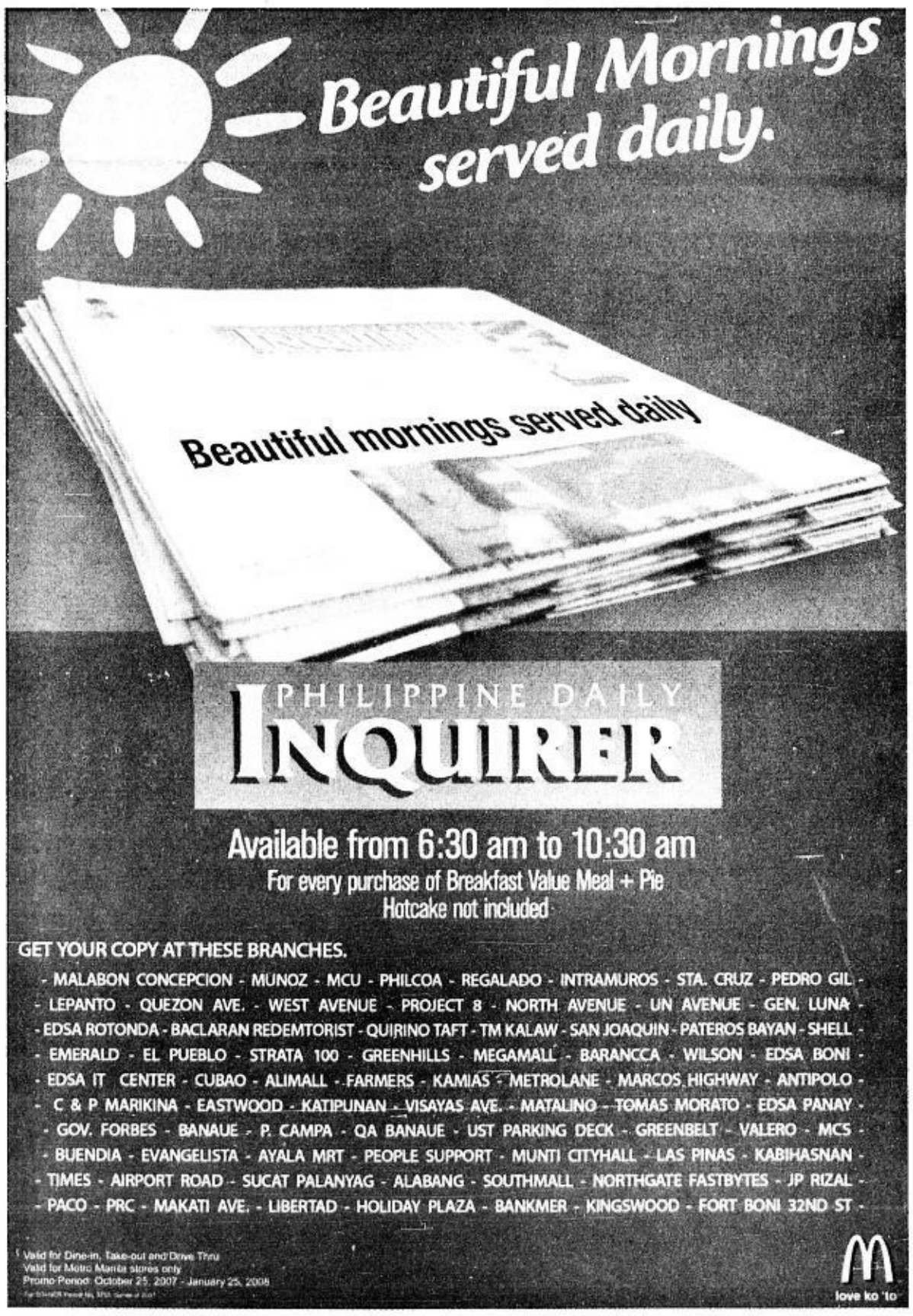
Dog owners, on the other hand, should observe their animals for signs of trauma which include incessant barking, restlessness (pacing back and forth) and shaking.

"To each his own," Tiosayco said, "there's no single formula in dealing with this situation." He added that animals living in high-rise condominiums are luckier because the noise level is lower.

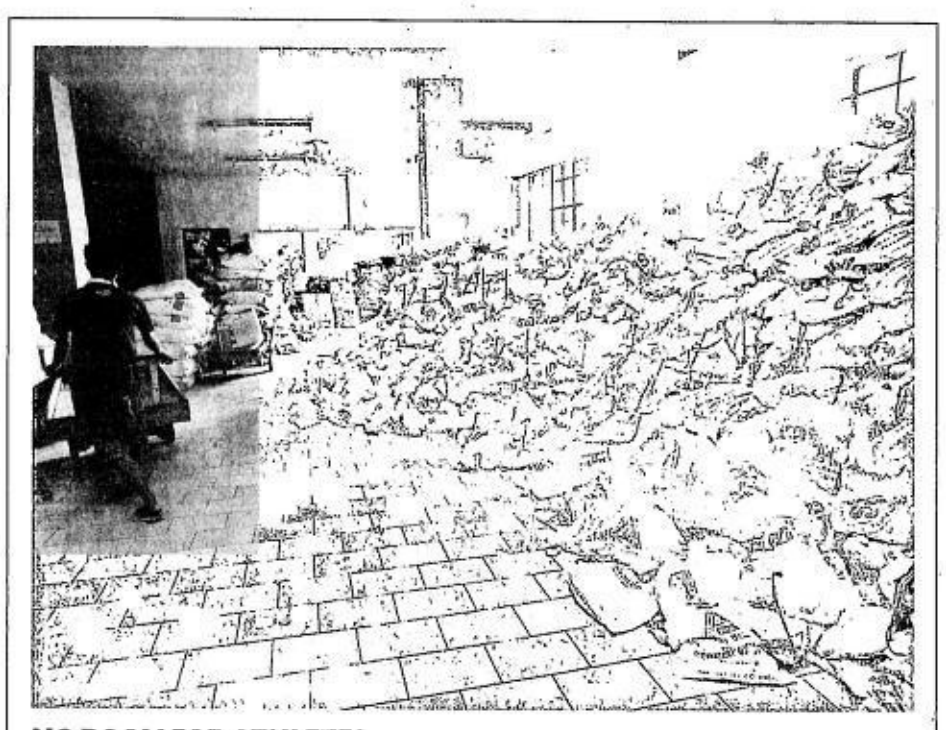
People living closer to the street, however, can play some music to mask some of the sounds coming from outside their house.

He recommended that dogs in cages outside the house be placed away from the area where firecrackers are being lit "because they have sensitive noses" and the air they breathe in could be harmful to them.

According to Carpio, cases of poisoning caused by gunpowder are common after the revelry. When dogs go on out on the streets, they might step on gunpowder which they could ingest when they lick their paws.



Young priest finds that giving comes from the most unexpected places



NO ROOM FOR ATHLETES
Rene Enriquez, 35, of Quezon City sent this text message: "I hope Quezon City government officials put an end to this yearly habit of using the sports gymnasium in Amoranto as a *bodega* (warehouse) to store Christmas giveaways for the barangays. Every December, children athletes are forced to stop training until these gifts are all given away." JOAN BONDOC

By Tina G. Santos

IT ONLY TAKES A GENEROUS heart to make a difference in the lives of the less fortunate.

This is what Fr. Ronaldo Manabat, 26, aims for—to make poor people happy not just during the holiday season but all throughout the year.

Fondly called Father Zenki by friends and parishioners of the Shrine of the Nuestra Señora de Guia (Ermita Church) in Manila where he spent his deaconship, Manabat has committed himself to bringing cheer to indigent families through his various charities.

Along with several volunteers, Manabat, through the Flos Carmeli Charity Apostolate which he formally established in 2005, has been feeding beggars and giving basic academic training to child laborers and street children in Metro Manila.

TALES OF THE CITY

"We pack sandwiches and juices which we distribute to hungry vagrants," he told the INQUIRER. "We teach kids who sell sampaguita, those who work instead of going to school, to read and write so they won't be fooled by unscrupulous individuals who could take advantage of them."

Manabat, who himself was born to a poor couple—a farmer father and a mother who worked as a domestic helper in Macau—has also been sending impoverished but deserving students to school and helping out indigent patients by shouldering part of their hospital expenses.

No gifts, just cash

To raise money for his cause, the priest has turned his birthday celebrations into fund raisers. "In lieu of gifts, my friends donate money which I use to help others. It's nice to know that there are many big-hearted people who want to help," he said. "I can't do this alone. I believe I'm just an instrument of God to let others become more generous."

On his 25th birthday, Manabat chose 25 families who received livelihood packages like banana cue and cigarette vending sets.

"We give them complete packages," he said. "If it's a banana cue showcase, everything they need—from the cooking oil to the pan, bananas and sticks—are provided. We also train them so that all they need to worry about is how to make their small business grow."

"At least what they get are not all dole outs because you also teach them how to make a living," he added.

This holiday season, Manabat has not only prepared gifts for Ivatan kids in Batanes where he is now based. He also made sure that volunteers of Flos Carmeli would carry out his traditional Oplan Emmanuel, a gift-giving and feeding activity for poor children in Metro Manila.

"This is our way of making others feel that God is really with them," Manabat, who also holds healing Masses and gives talks and lectures on issues concerning the youth and family life, said.

The priest's dedication to helping other people is rooted in his experiences when he was a young boy, he disclosed.

At age 12, instead of spending most of his time at play, Manabat said he became preoccupied with what was happening around him.

"I noticed that there were many underprivileged people in our community," he said. "To help them, I went around, handing out letters to rich families, asking them to bring small amounts of rice and a few cans of sardines for our needy neighbors."

Surprisingly, many responded to his call, prompting him to turn the gift-giving activity into a yearly event.

"The charity work started several years ago, but it was formally named Flos Carmeli only in 2005," said the priest who hails from Zaragosa, Nueva Ecija.

Unknown to many people, Manabat's concern for the poor was a strong indication of what he was destined to be when he grew up.

"When I was young, I would volunteer for the role of the priest when my friends and I played games," he said.

"I used a blanket as a substitute for a priest's habit and biscuits and cold coffee or soft drinks as make-believe bread and wine," Manabat added, smiling at the recollection.

But God's plan for him became clearer after he received his first communion at age 10.

"I told God, 'I want to serve you but I don't know how. What I can promise you is that I will use my life serving you and serving others.' Since then, I started consecrating my life to the Lord and to the Blessed Mother," Manabat said.

"I wanted to live a holy life that was devoted to serving people," he added although he admitted that he found what he felt then a little weird.

Manabat said he tried to lead a "normal" life. He entered into relationships but he was not happy. "I felt I was just making fools out of the girls. I loved them but at the back of my mind, I knew that the relationships would not last because I was really determined to serve Him."

FOR FR. Ronaldo "Zenki" Manabat, happiness comes from giving to the poor and needy. RYAN LIM

The second in a brood of five, Manabat broached the idea of entering priesthood to his family right after high school.

Opposition from parents

Although his parents disagreed and encouraged him to pursue a different career, he said he was intent on becoming a priest, with or without their support.

"They didn't pay for my tuition. There was a point when I was almost booted out of the seminary because of unpaid school bills," he said.

"But when God calls you, He finds ways," he quickly added, saying that eventually, he was able to get a scholarship. "Instead of feeling disheartened, I took my family's displeasure as a challenge. It only strengthened my decision to follow my vocation."

Manabat said his parents later had a change of heart when he was already wearing his *sutana* (vestments).

After his ordination in May, Manabat's first assignment was in Mindoro where he helped Mangyan tribes fight land grabbers. Before being assigned to Batanes, Manabat also lived with and provided livelihood skills training to urban poor families in Metro Manila.

"I believe that the love of God must be manifested with the love of neighbor," he said, adding that his ultimate satisfaction was in giving to other people. "And seeing the smile and relief on the people's faces is really fulfilling," he said.

Those interested in Rev. Fr. Ronaldo Zenki Manabat's work can write to him at Sto. Domingo de Guzman Cathedral, 1 Lizardo St., Kayhuvukan, Basco, 3900 Batanes or e-mail him at semzenki@yahoo.com

METRO Citizen's call
0918-8985566

Choosy cab driver

MAY I REPORT the unfair practice of this taxi driver with plate number TWK 118 who refused to bring us to our destination from Jupiter Street to Osmeña Highway last Dec. 13 at 9:15 p.m. The reason he gave was that the traffic was bad. In the first place, he wanted us to pay him a flat rate but we insisted on metered rates. After we did not agree to his proposal that we pay him extra even if the meter was running, he told us to get off. I told him that we would report him to the authorities, but he said he didn't care and that it was up to him to choose his passengers and his destinations. I hope drivers like him are taught a lesson or two about the real meaning of customer service.

EMELET AYSON, 38, Makati City

An overpass for Marcos Highway pedestrians

PEDESTRIANS need an overpass to cross the wide Marcos Highway at De la Paz, Pasig City. Many people cross this thoroughfare especially during rush hour in the morning.

NOEL, 37, Pasig City

Waterless on Premium Street

ATTENTION, Maynilad authorities! We have been almost waterless in our area covered by the Quirino business center where our supply trickles in only two hours a day, at the unholy hours of 2 a.m. to 4 a.m. Despite a series of complaints addressed to Maynilad, there has been no action taken by its personnel. This is a repeat of last year when there was hardly any water coming out of the taps in some 20 to 30 houses in the area. Help, please!!

CECILE JUAN, 50, Premium Street, GSIS Village, Quezon City

Potholes and traffic in Bicutan area

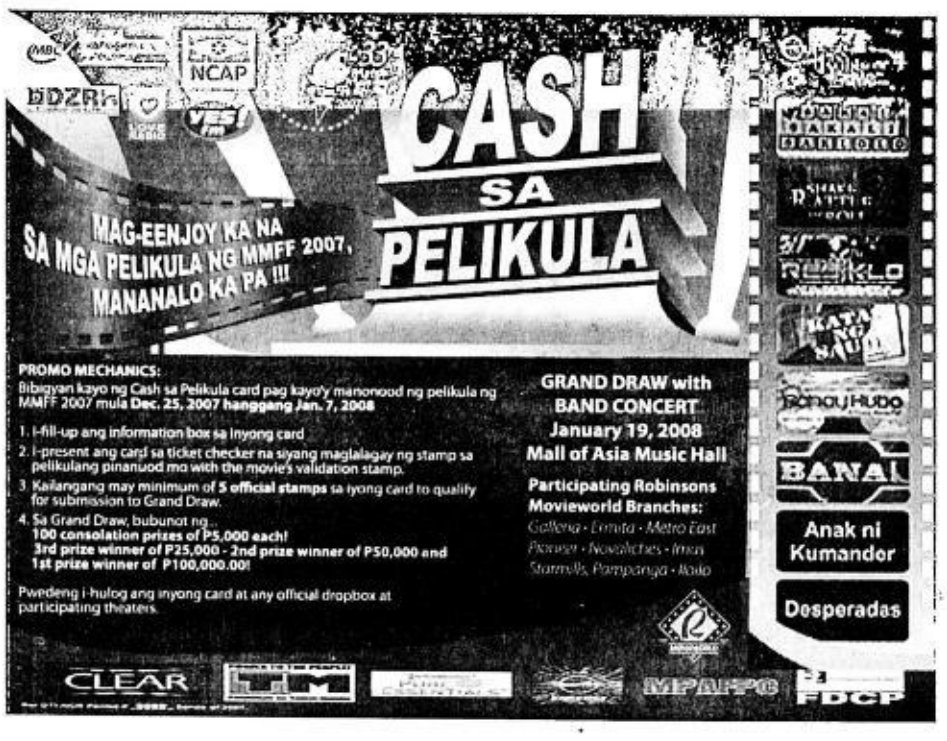
IRE-REPORT ko lang na ilang months na ang kalye dito sa tapat ng Duraflex East Service Road pagkalagpas lang ng Bicutan Market ay sobrang lalim ng mga lubak kaya napakalaking perwisyo talaga. Sira ng ang mga kotse at dahilan din ito ng trapik. Pakitulong po naman. (I would like to report that the street in front of Duraflex East Service Road right after the Bicutan Market is full of potholes that it has become a nightmare for motorists for several months now. Apart from the damage done to passing vehicles, it has also been the source of traffic problems in the area. Help!)

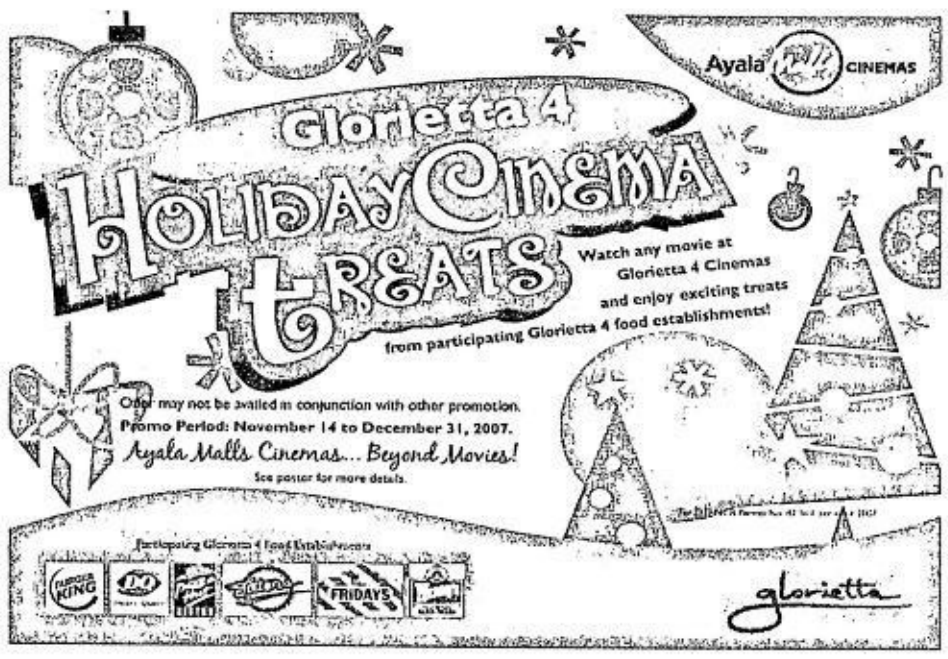
NELSON ANGELES, 40, Parañaque City

Water leak in Barangay Balong Bato, QC

BETWEEN Jam Auto Supply and Flying V Gasoline Station in Barangay Balong Bato, Quezon City, there is a water leak on the gutter side. That's a lot of water going to waste. Thanks for your attention.

TESS VILLARAMA, 52, Quezon City





METRO BRIEFS

Man nabbed for 'kwitis'

THE POLICE yesterday arrested a man who injured two persons after he accidentally set off 50 sticks of "kwitis," a type of firecracker, in Quiapo, Manila. Narciso de Leon, 43, of P. Tucos Street, Quiapo, was testing one of the firecrackers when sparks flew from the *kwitis* he was holding and set off the other firecrackers. The incident occurred at around 9 a.m. near Quinta Market on Orosco Street. Renato Pillas, 29, a resident of the area was injured along with the suspect's kin, Arsenia Cortez, 57, who declined to file a complaint. De Leon was charged at the Manila City Prosecutor's Office with multiple physical injuries. Meanwhile, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim will lead the city's New Year's Eve countdown at 11:45 p.m. today at Rajah Sulayman on Roxas Boulevard where a fireworks display will usher in 2008.

Allison W. Lopez

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Who killed Bhutto? We may never know

ISLAMABAD—AS WITH OTHER ASSASSINATIONS in Pakistan's bloody political history, the world may never know who killed Benazir Bhutto—but there is no shortage of potential culprits to choose from, analysts say.

There could be almost as many motives as well, in a country with a murky nexus of intelligence agencies, dozens of Islamic militant outfits, hundreds of tribal clans and an army whose reach extends to every corner of Pakistani life.

While the government was quick to point a finger at al-Qaida, that name is little more than a convenient catch-all for a staggering array of militant groups, and the reality is vastly more complex, analysts say.

The government's ties with Islamic militants, whether training them to fight in Kashmir or jockey for power in Afghanistan, leave the state apparatus itself with questions to answer, they say.

"It is common knowledge that some of the intelligence agencies have maintained links with militant and sectarian groups, dating back to the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan," said political analyst Hasan Askari.

"Even after Pakistan joined the global war on terrorism, there was always doubt whether these agencies fully severed their connections to militant elements," said Askari, former head of political science at Punjab University.

The leaders of Pakistan's three intelligence agencies are all current or retired members of the military, which has run the country for more than half its existence—and has its own checkered history with the Bhutto family.

After Bhutto survived the worst terror attack in Pakistan's history in October, she blamed remnants of the regime of Gen. Zia ul-Haq, who toppled her father from power in 1977 and had him hanged two years later.

President Pervez Musharraf was head of the military when he seized power in a 1999 coup and remained army chief until just over a month ago, giving up a lifelong career in uniform only after intense pressure to bring Pakistan nominally under civilian rule.

His decision to become a US ally after Sept. 11 enraged Islamic hardliners, who have everything to gain from fostering turmoil, which dissipates the state's ability to rein them in.

"Their aim is to have a safe haven in Pakistan from where they can carry out an agenda of radical Islam," said a top government counterterrorism official who could not be named.

"Their action plan is to eliminate leaders and strike at targets which could deeply hurt state institutions," the official said. "Their long-term plan is to destabilize Pakistan, as that would give them space to move around."

Adding to the mix of homegrown militants, Pakistan's northern tribal areas became a safe haven for the hardcore Arab leadership of al-Qaida, including Osama bin Laden, after they escaped from Afghanistan in November 2001.

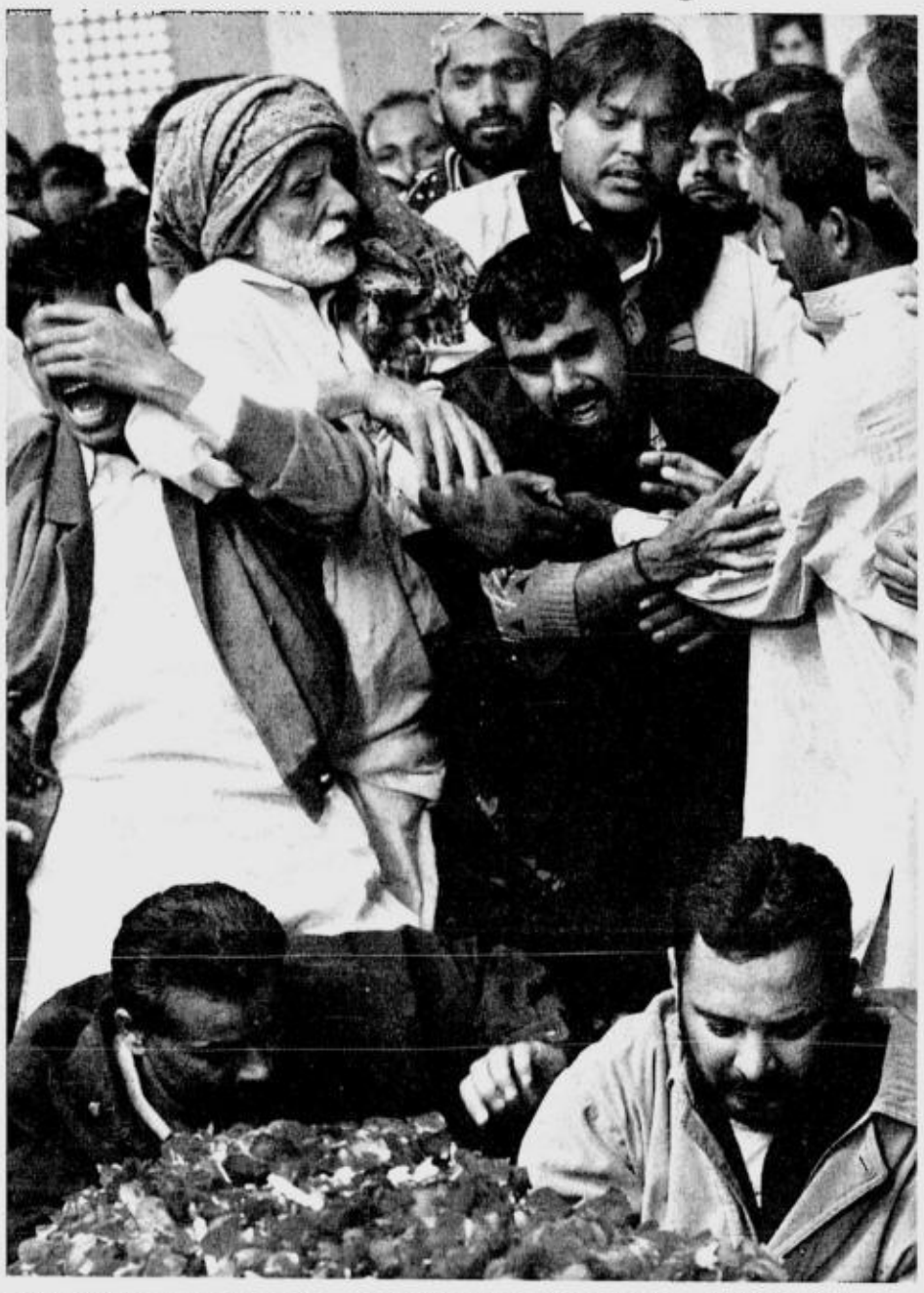
From this unruly mountainous region al-Qaida has plotted a global terrorist war that has included two attempts to kill Musharraf and the 7/7 London underground bombings.

If the jumble of disparate militant groups may once have had different goals, they were united by a hatred of Bhutto, whose enormous popular appeal and pro-US stance were a major obstacle to their objectives.

Analysts say her elimination—capping a year of unprecedented militant violence that has left more than 800 people dead—can only be seen to undermine Musharraf's assertions that he has brought radicals under control.

"Ultimately, governments have to accept responsibility for the circumstances under which such acts take place," said Rasul Baksh Rais of the Lahore University of Management Sciences.

"Although the government would not appear to benefit from Bhutto's assassination, it cannot absolve itself of responsibility," Rais said. "The Musharraf government has many questions to answer." *AFP*



SUPPORTERS of Pakistan's former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto mourning at the grave of their leader in Garhi Khuda Bakhash near Larkana, Pakistan, Dec. 30. AP

TV shows photos of '2 attackers'

ISLAMABAD—A PAKISTANI TELEVISION channel broadcast on Sunday grainy still pictures of what it said appeared to be two men who attacked and killed opposition leader Benazir Bhutto.

Former Prime Minister Bhutto was killed in a gun and bomb attack on Thursday as she stood up through the sun-roof of her bullet-proof vehicle to wave to supporter as she left an election rally in the city of Rawalpindi.

The government has blamed al-Qaida.

Dawn News Television showed three pictures it said it had obtained from an amateur photographer.

One showed two men standing in the crowd outside the rally ground before Bhutto left.

One was a clean-cut young man wearing sun glasses, a white shirt and dark waist coat. Behind him stood a man with a white shawl over his head, who Dawn said was believed to be the bomber.

Two other photographs showed the clean-cut man pointing a pistol at Bhutto as she left the rally.

He appeared to be about 3 meters from Bhutto, standing on the left of her vehicle, pointing the gun with his right hand as she faced away from him.

Authorities said three shots were fired at Bhutto moments before a suicide bomber set off explosives. As well as Bhutto, 23 people were killed.

Authorities have not said how many attackers they believed were involved.

Senior police and government officials declined immediate comment saying a four-officer team was handling the investigation.

The government said Bhutto was killed when the force of the blast smashed her head into a lever on the sun-roof, which fractured her skull.

Her party dismisses that as "ludicrous" saying she was killed by a bullet in the head.

Doctors did not carry out a post-mortem of Bhutto's body on the instructions of her family, officials say.

The Interior Ministry said on Saturday her body could be exhumed for more tests if her party wanted. *Reuters*

France prepares to stub out smoking in cafés

PARIS—FRENCH SMOKERS have just a few more hours to indulge their habit in public before the country joins several of its neighbors on Wednesday in imposing a complete tobacco ban in bars, restaurants and nightclubs.

What was long regarded as a citizen's inalienable right comes to a definitive end just after the start of the New Year, and though some fear the demise of France's cherished café culture, few predict any serious opposition.

"The decree has been ready for more than a year. Everyone knows it is going to be applied. No one can say they've been duped," said Health Minister Roselyne Bachelot.

The outright ban follows February's prohibition of smoking in offices, schools, hospitals, stations, airports and trains, and places the country alongside Ireland, Britain, Italy and Spain in the European vanguard against public smoking.

The 11-month time-lag for "places of entertainment and conviviality" was to allow owners to install—if they wished—specially insulated and ventilated smokers' rooms, an expensive option that very few have taken up.

Technically the ban means that as the clock chimes midnight New Year's revellers will be told to stub out their cigarettes and cigars or risk a fine, but in practice the government has said there will be no attempt to enforce it on Jan. 2.

Some cafés and restaurants have already converted to no smoking, with some claiming it has brought in more customers, and the government points to the experience in Italy where it says there was a 20-percent increase in turnover when bars and restaurants banned tobacco.

But opposition has come from groups representing tobacconists and café-owners, who fear smoking customers will prefer to socialize at home. They are asking for special dispensations in rural areas where the village "cafe-tabac" is part of the social fabric. *AFP*

Bin Laden says US seeks to exploit Iraqi oil

DUBAI—AL-QAIDA LEADER Osama bin Laden accused Washington of plotting to take control of Iraq's oil and urged Iraqis to reject efforts to rebuild a US-backed national unity government there.

The militant leader also vowed in a recording posted on an Islamist website on Saturday to expand jihad to liberate all Palestinian land "from the (Mediterranean) sea to the (Jordan) river" and said his group will never recognize Israel.

"America seeks, alongside its agents in the region, to create an allied government ... that would accept in advance the presence of major US bases in Iraq and give the Americans all they wish of Iraq's oil," he said in the 56-minute recording.

The Saudi-born militant said the envisaged Iraqi government was also meant to help Washington "fully dominate" the region with help from allies such as Saudi Arabia.

"The government of Riyadh is still playing its wicked roles," he said, describing Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah as the United States' "chief agent."

Referring to a Saudi push in February to help Palestinian rivals agree a unity government which fell apart in June, he said Riyadh was part of a scheme to lure Islamist Palestinian militant group Hamas away from its jihadist roots.

"I assure our kin in Palestine especially that we shall expand our jihad ... We will not recognize a state for the Jews over even an inch of Palestinian soil," said Bin Laden.

Bin Laden did not mention accusations al-Qaida was behind Thursday's assassination of Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto. A Qaida-allied militant leader has denied involvement.

Bin Laden took a swing at Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Iran-backed Lebanese Hezbollah group, for accepting the expansion of a United Nations force in Lebanon after the Shiite group's war with the Jewish state in 2006.

The peacekeepers sent to Lebanon after the war were there to "protect the Jews," said Bin Laden, whose group belongs to a school of Islam that sees Shiite Muslims as heretics.

Bin Laden said Washington was planning to form a new Iraqi national unity government and warned that those who took part would be turning their backs on Islam.

Sunni Arabs pulled out of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's Shiite-led government earlier this year, accusing it of being too sectarian. *Reuters*

Concerns grow over delayed Colombia hostage deal

VILLAVICENCIO, COLOMBIA—A Venezuelan-sponsored plan to free three hostages held by Colombian rebels was stalled by the guerrillas' failure to reveal their location, and Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said it may unravel if the stalemate drags on.

Concern was growing on Sunday about the mission to release two former Colombian politicians and the young son born to one of them in captivity as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, withheld their whereabouts after weeks of promising to free them.

GONZALEZ AFP

Chavez negotiated the rescue effort with the FARC and had initially hoped to see the release take place on Thursday.

"If this were to drag on three or four or five days, for security reasons, it could collapse and we would have to think of something else," he said late on Saturday.

The leftist firebrand was not the only one voicing concern.

"The question is why is it taking so long for the FARC to give the coordinates. They were the ones who proposed this hostage release," a senior Colombian government official told Reuters, asking not to be identified.

Others involved in planning the handover said there was still time for the FARC to say where it was keeping Consuelo Gonzalez, Clara Rojas and her son Emmanuel, who was fathered by a guerrilla fighter and is thought to be 4 years old.

"We do not have the coordinates but we could get them at any time, and then we expect the mission to move along," said Yves Heller, spokesperson for the International Committee of the Red Cross, which is helping coordinate the hand-over. *Reuters*

Surprise, surprise: New York has become one of US' safest cities

NEW YORK—ASTONISHINGLY, the nation's largest city is among the safest.

Homicides in New York are expected to fall below 500 this year, fewer than in any year since reliable record-keeping began 44 years ago. Mayor Michael Bloomberg and his police commissioner, Ray Kelly, could easily pat each other on the back and call it a day. Laudably, they have instead pledged to bring crime under control in neighborhoods that have so far eluded success.

The mayor and Kelly plan to send all 914 officers from the new class of graduated recruits to join other officers assigned to these tough areas. This will essentially double the Operation Impact force, which matches new recruits with seasoned officers and is credited with helping to reduce crime in nearly all categories, including rapes and robberies.

New technologies have paid off, as have innovative strategies, such as periodically checking homes where there have been reports of domestic violence. Homicides in that category alone dropped by one-third.

The overall statistics are all the more amazing because the department has been operating with limited resources. Even as the city continues to grow in population, with record numbers of visitors, the police force, at 35,400 officers, remains well below its authorized strength of nearly 38,000.

And recruiting has suffered in part because New York offers the worst starting annual salary in any major city, $25,100. Nearly 300 recruits in the graduating class did not make it, many because of the financial strain.

The hot spots where new officers will be dispatched are predominantly minority neighborhoods in central Brooklyn, the Bronx, and parts of Manhattan and Queens. The police must take special care to protect the civil rights of residents, most of whom are law abiding. Kelly's choice of venue for his announcement—Harlem's 28th Precinct—suggested that he intends to take that issue seriously.

The commissioner noted that the number of murders had dropped to three in a precinct that once recorded more than 100 deaths every year. That's the kind of success every corner of New York deserves. *New York Times*

COMMUNICATIONS INFORMATION ENTERTAINMENT TRANSACTIONS

Kahit gaano man karami ang trip, get to watch it with the leader, SMART.

With SMART, the leader in mobile entertainment, get to watch MORE of your favorite comedy, cartoons, fashion, sports, news, and celebrity videos on your cellphone anytime, anywhere!

Go to wap.smart.com.ph/3G and click on "TV" or "Downloads"

Mobile Videos

Disney Christmas
Beauty and the Beast
Lilo and Stitch
Mickey and Friends
Pooh and Friends
Aristocrats

Funny Videos
Cross Dresser
Farting Girl
Flying Sweaters
On the Bench
Sticky Paper

Celebrities
Avril Lavigne
Lindsay Lohan
Paris Hilton
Sharon Stone
Tori Spelling

Cartoons
Betty Boop
Bugs Bunny
Felix the Cat
Superman
Tom and Jerry

Sports
Badminton
Baskeball
Boxing
Golf
Taekwondo

TV
ABS-CBN
GMA
ANC
DZMM
Discovery Channel

Activate your 3G/GPRS handset now. Just send **SET <phone model>** to **211**. Ex. **SET N70**

Standard video streaming & downloading rates apply. Service is handset dependent.
For questions, comments, or concerns, you may call the SMART Hotline at 888-1111 via landline, or *888 using your SMART cellphone.
You may also visit www.smart.com.ph/3G/Video for more details.

SMART
THE POWER TO LEAD

SPORTS
Website: www.inquirer.net/sports
Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa
Text us your feedback: Inquirer sprt name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)
E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

FOR whipping up an incredible fightback and making history, these hardy Batang Pier of Harbour Centre toast the very best of their four title wins on center court like no one else can. RYAN LIM

Harbour five nails record fourth crown

Batang Pier rally from 19 pts down

By Jasmine W. Payo

HARBOUR CENTRE PULLED OFF AN UNBELIEVABLE TURN-around yesterday and became the first team in PBL history to capture four straight championships.

After spoiling Hapee's perfect record run the other day, the Batang Pier went all the way with a dramatic overtime 94-88 win over the Complete Protectors in Game 3 of the V-Go Extreme Energy Drink Cup at the Rizal Coliseum.

MOST VALUABLE: T.Y. Tang AUGUST DELA CRUZ

"What can I say, the boys just never gave up," said coach Jorge Gallent. "They really tried their best to win. We were down, but the players didn't want to give up. It's just the heart of the champions."

Harbour rallied from a 16-point deficit in the last nine minutes of regulation, forged the extension at 78-all with 4.8 seconds left on a split free throw by TY Tang then took the lead for the first time—and for good—early in the extension behind the player who blew Game 1 away with two missed free throws.

"This is Harbour Centre basketball, we never say die, we're never out of it," said Fil-Am Solomon Mercado, who won the Pivotal Player plum after unloading 14 of his 20 points in the last eight minutes of action.

"We just wanted to go out there and attack, be aggressive and see what will happen, and it happened," added Mercado, whose free throw muffs allowed Hapee to take Game 1, 72-69, Thursday and extend their unbeaten run to 12.

Hrbour ended Hapee's perfect run with a 73-59 rout the other night to pave the way for the winner-take-all match, which proved too much of a thriller that Harbour Centre owner Mikee Romero was rushed later to the hospital due to heart palpitations.

Batang Pier actually trailed by as many as 19 points, 36-55, early in the third quarter before outscoring the Complete Protectors, 42-23, for the rest of the regulation period to forge overtime.

"We just kept coming back," said Tang, who was honored as the Finals Most Valuable Player.

Mercado opened the extension by completing a three-point play that gave Batang Pier their first taste of the lead at 81-78, then later combined with Tang to give Harbour a 90-84 advantage with only 49.6 seconds left

Mercado finished with 20 points while Tang added 13 like Rico Maierhofer and Jerwin Gaco.

"After our Game 1 loss, we were still confident," said Gallent. "Just like what happened in the semifinals (versus San Mig Coffee), we came back. We took it a game at a time."

Fil-Am Gabe Norwood, who was sensational in the Complete Protectors' explosive run earlier in the tournament, proved the goat this time.

With Hapee protecting a slim 78-77 lead, Norwood bungled two foul shots that could have given the Complete Protectors more breathing room in the last 7.6 seconds of the fourth quarter.

Seconds later, Tang came up with the equalizing free throw that gave Harbour a new lease on life.

The Complete Protectors, who registered a blistering 66-percent shooting clip in the first half, seemed to have the crown in their grasp as Mark Borboran, who shot a game-high 21 points, Larry Rodriguez, Reed Juntilla and Norwood flashed superb forms.

The scores:

HARBOUR CENTRE 94—Mercado 20, Tang 13, Maierhofer 13, Gaco 13, Ababou 9, Vergara 5, Gonzales 5, Taylor 4, Gamboa 4, Asoro 4, Malabanan 4, Fernandez 0.

HAPEE 87—Borboran 21, Rodriguez 17, Juntilla 16, Norwood 12, Daa 7, Mercado 5, Espiritu 4, Saguindel 3, Hermida 2, Grijaldo 1, Quinday 0, Hugnatan 0.

Quarters: 12-21, 34-47, 50-66, 78-78 (reg), 94-88 (OT)

Ring expert sees Pacquiao stopping Marquez

AN AMERICAN BOXING EXPERT SEES Manny Pacquiao putting an end to his rivalry with Mexican Juan Manuel Marquez by scoring a technical knockout win in their rematch in March.

Michael Marley, executive editor of the website boxingconfidential.com included this prediction in his "Guaranteed to Happen in 2008" list.

He said that Pacquiao, the WBC International super featherweight champion, would beat two more foes next year.

Marley predicted that the 29-year-old Gen. Santos City southpaw, while behind on points, would "twice floor Marquez and win by TKO in the closing seconds of the penultimate round."

The rematch between Pacquiao (45-3-2, 34 KOs) and Marquez (48-3-1, 35 KOs) is slated March 15 at the Mandalay Bay Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Their first meeting, in May 2004 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, ended in a draw. Pacquiao sent Marquez down three times in the first round but the judges eventually ruled a split draw.

Marley likewise predicted that Pacquiao would outpoint WBC lightweight holder David Diaz in September when he moves up to 135-pound class.

Marley also sees Pacquiao climbing further to 140 lb and stopping Britain's Ricky Hatton in nine rounds.

Diaz is set to defend his title against a still undetermined opponent in the undercard of the Pacquiao-Marquez bout.

If Diaz and Pacquiao win, Top Rank promoter Bob Arum said he would arrange a fight between the two in July.

Arum added that another Pacquiao win may lead to a battle against Golden Boy Promotions boss Oscar De La Hoya.

"Manny is going to knock him out," Arum had said of Marquez in earlier interviews. "Manny feels that he has really improved dramatically since that first fight with Marquez and that Marquez has gone backwards."

Pacquiao has defeated six Mexican fighters in a row, including Erik Morales (two times) and Marco Antonio Barrera.

Romina S. Austria

PACQUIAO: Technical knockout victory

HARBOUR Centre's Rico Maierhofer drives off Hapee's Mark Borboran late in the fourth quarter of yesterday's PBL championship game at the Rizal Coliseum. *Story on A21.* RYAN LIM

Nanan All Star five nips RP's Telecoms

By Roy Luarca

SHUI TOU, CHINA—FIFTH AVENUE TELECOMS' FIERY RALLY FELL SHORT Saturday night, allowing the Nanan All Stars to score a 70-67 victory in the 7th Zheng Chenggong Cup international basketball tournament here.

The loss dropped the Filipinos into a tie with their tormentors at 1-1 and left the defending champions with the tough task of sweeping their three remaining games to get a crack at the title won by the Laguna Lakers in 1999 and a FedEx-backed squad in 2003.

STANDINGS	W	L
Hong Kong	2	0
Indonesia	2	0
Fifth Avenue	1	1
Nanan	1	1
Singapore	0	2
Macau	0	2

They will try to get back on track against Bumi Kaya of Indonesia, which is powered by national players and is unbeaten after two games, Sunday night.

In other games Saturday, Indonesia trounced Macau, 90-71, and Hong Kong dumped Singapore, 82-60, in Nanan City.

Visibly tired after arriving in this chilly marble-producing town barely three hours before the game, the Filipinos still managed to threaten at 65-64 with still a minute left behind Ronnie Zagala and Luis Palaganas .

But the taller Chinese kept their poise with burly 6-foot-8 center Xu Nan scoring on a short stab then added two free throws for 69-64 following a flubbed three-pointer by Fil-Am Michael Andre Burtscher.

Zagala, 5th Avenue's top scorer with 35 points in a 93-91 nipping of Macau Friday, struck with a three-point jumper in the last six seconds, 69-67.

But Romel David was forced to foul Xie Ya Cai in the ensuing play and the Chinese made the front end of his free throws for the final count.

"*Masyadong malamig* (It's too cold)," complained East Avenue playing coach Junnel Mendiola, referring to the prevailing 12-degree temperature. "*Naninigas ang kamay namin pag naka-upo* (Our hands get stiff when we are on the bench)."

The 26-year-old Zagala, a three-time national player, wound up with 18 points, seven rebounds and four assists with Palaganas and former pro Braulio Lim adding 10 points each.

With springy Wen De Long at the firing end, the Chinese kept the nine-man 5th Avenue squad at bay throughout, posting their biggest lead of 45-36 midway in the third quarter.

The victory wheeled the Chinese, boasting an average ceiling of nearly 6-foot-5, back into contention in the six-team, single-round tournament.

They absorbed a 68-62 beating from a pesky Hong Kong side in the inaugural matches in Nanan City on Friday.

The 6-foot-5 forward Wen powered the Chinese with 20 points and a tournament-high 19 rebounds. Wng Xiao Dong contributed 16 points, including four triples, along with Ding Zhen Xiong.

Fifth Avenue, champion of the Millennium Basketball League, tangles with Thong Whye of Singapore Monday night before closing its stint here against Hong Kong, the 2003 runner-up of the quadrennial event, on New Year's Day.

The scores:

NANAN ALL STARS 70—Wei DL 20, Wang XD 16, Ding ZX 16, Xu N 8, Xie YC 3, Zhang W 3, We CH 2, Ye CH 2, Chen YF 0.

5TH AVENUE 67—Zagala 18, Palaganas 10, Lim 10, Dizon 9, David 7, Mendoza 7, Mendiola 4, Burtscher 2.

Quarters: 17-15, 38-32, 50-48, 70-67

A book for a sports monument

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

JULIAN MALONSO, FORMER PRESident of the Philippine Olympic Committee, is coming out with a book, "Memoirs," a celebration of the many years he has dedicated to Philippine sports.

A retired Army lieutenant colonel, Malonso has generously lent us excerpts from the foreword to his book which, he said, is due out in February at the latest.

Please share:

The big heroes in the world of Julian Malonso are not swashbuckling sports superstars.

Malonso's idols are not field competitors.

They are not the incredible overachievers who lord it over battlegrounds as though these arenas were created to be their exclusive stage.

Their names may not ring a bell to modern-day spectators: Baron Pierre de Coubertin, Avery Brundage, Manuel Luis Quezon, Lord Killanin and, yes, the unshakeable Dr. Regino Ylanan.

These great men fought a strange battle which Malonso continues to pursue in the gray winter of his quest, a creaky Don Quixote with neither horse nor armor, seeking the re-establishment of noble Olympic ideals in our overly politicized sports landscape.

* * *

Malonso no longer packs the old knockout, his punches could now be only limp, insignificant paws, but he nonetheless fights in his own incredible way.

He would fire off critical commentaries against gross commercialism and shameless politicking in Philippine sports.

Lucky if any of these straight, terse comments see print.

But he keeps them coming, the angrier the better.

He never tires sending statements on how national sports affairs should be properly conducted.

He had been called names. But the tag Last of the Purists, coined by kinder spectators, has proved most fitting.

* * *

In fact, several priests he had served in various capacities at the San Juan de Letran College, where he once was the unblinking physical education director, felt he deserved something equal to a monument for his contributions to Philippine sports.

Not that they could not build one for him, but these priests next came up with a better, safer idea.

They goaded and convinced the reluctant Malonso, short of twisting his arms, to write a book.

The result is an extraordinary book written by an extraordinary gentleman.

Of course, Malonso knows his subject like the back of his hand.

He served twice as president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, highest sports post in the land, in 1974 and 1980.

* * *

It's also worth noting that the young Malonso, obviously lured by the popularity and rapid commercialism of basketball, once suited up as a Letran Knight, immediately before the emergence of the feared Murder Inc. skippered by the great Lauro Mumar. His contemporaries included Louie Tabuena and the venerable Crispin Aldiosa, who would later take a firm hand in the improvement of basketball officiating hereabouts.

Before that, Malonso said, he had also tried his luck in boxing and football.

But he said he actually abandoned his dream of excelling in basketball following the rise of the tall, mighty Caloy Loyzaga, the Great Difference who, then playing for Tervalac, promptly put him in his proper place when their paths crossed at a sandlot in Sta. Mesa, Manila.

Well, it's history now how Malonso pursued a more important, if less flamboyant career in sports, through a gallant advocacy anchored on the restoration of Olympic ideals in the Philippines.

* * *

He calls his book, a product of long labor, autobiographical, thereby assuring readers enjoyable chapters on the adventures of a controversial, nonsense fighter for purity in sports, maybe second only in zeal and dedication to the legendary Dr. Regino Ylanan, former secretary-treasurer of the original Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation (Paaf).

Malonso traces the early years of the Paaf, who had American William Forbes as its first president, before the ascent of Manuel Luis Quezon as first Filipino head of the prestigious federation.

The book touches on myriad subjects, is rich in details on the teachings of mythical sports leaders, led by Coubertin, father of the modern Olympics, and great International Olympic Committee heads like Brundage and Killanin.

To repeat, this undoubtedly is a remarkable achievement from a tireless, idealistic reformer, who's often dubbed a rebel and subversive.

Selfish, shameless politicians in Philippine sports won't like it.

Malonso's book is a shining monument.

* * *

(IT'S RIVERO. The surname of Mang Ramon Rivero, a tireless philanthropist who again lent a generous hand for the success of last week's gift-giving for poor farm kids in Pangao, Lipa City, was misspelled as Rivera. Our apologies... On Dec. 28, the Marikina Youth Baseball Federation opened its 2007 Christmas grassroots baseball tournament at the Marikina Sports Center. There are two divisions, Pinto for 7-8 years old, and Shetland for 6-years-old and under. The tournament, which runs until Jan. 6, involves six barangays, says coordinator Ricky Florencio, who never tires pitching for baseball in "my own little way.")

SPORTSWATCH

FEU Team A, Nava, Palomo sweep Asean varsity chess

Final standings:

27.5 points—**FEU Team A (RP)**; 25.5—National Univ. of Singapore (SIN), **FEU Team B (RP)**; 24.0—Univ. of Colombo Team A (SRI); 23.0—Univ. of Malaya, Team A (MAL); 22.5—PTVA (IND); 22.0—Nanyang Tech. Univ. Team A (SIN); 21.5—Azad Islamic Univ. (IRN); 20.0—Univ. of Malaya, Team B (MAL), Univ. Pendidikan Sultan Idris Team A (MAL), Univ. Islam Antarabangsa Team A (MAL).

FIDE MASTER RODERICK NAVA AND JENny Rose Palomo swept the individual titles while leading Far Eastern University Team A to the championship in the recent 12th Rakan Muda GACC (Grand Asean Chess Challenge) World Inter-Varsity Chess Championships at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur.

Nava, a member of the national training pool, split the point with International Master Shojaat Gharehgardeh of Iran's Azad Islamic University to top the men's division.

Palomo settled for a draw with compatriot Ronna Reigner Senora of FEU Team B to rule the women's side.

Nava and Palomo wound up with seven wins, a loss and a draw each for 7.5 points. They won 1,000 ringgit (P12,000) and a gold medal each.

FEU Team A, which also had Luffe Magdalaga and John Ranel Morazo, amassed 27.5 combined points to pocket the team title and the top purse of 2,000 ringgit.

Nava's only loss was dealt by fellow Fide Master Hong Nguyen Ly of Singapore in the fourth round while Palomo bowed to Dawn Hui Sau Mun of NTA in the opening round.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Imperial Ballet (4), Allez Allez (5), Grand Total (6), Shining Fame (1)

Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Storm Signal (1), Nirvana (2), Sir Barbaro (6), Precious Metal (4)

Race 3—(Penta/Qrt/Tri—Leg Up (8), Speedy Klm (3), Angel's Star (9), Golden Square (7), Wooden Ship (1)

Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Bohemian Dave (1), City of Dreams (5), Don Alejandro (2), Think Tank (7)

Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Remus (1), Chabacana (3), Bahrain (2), Blitzkrieg (5)

Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Hello Africa (8), Queen of Gala (10), Queen Josephine (7), Kapit Bahay (6), Bom's Bom's (2)

Race 7—(Tri)—Drama belle (4), Copper Dew (1), Wild Orchid/Real Spicy (2)

Race 8—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Without Warning (1), Virgin Hill (9), Dato's Pride (8), Unleashed (5), Jade Express (3)

Race 9—(Qrt/Tri)—Lord Elgene (5), Saintly Path (3), One Man's Soul (7), Quick Play (8)

Race 10—(Qrt/Tri)—Regal Boom (1), No Fear (3), Earl Gray (5), Tiger Song (2)

Race 11—(Qrt/Tri)—EJ's Magic (8), Pele (6), Danehill Dave (2), Quant Je Puis (7)

Race 12—(Qrt/Tri)—Five O'Clock (7), Grand Fiesta (3), Run Like D'Wind (6), Maximum Impact (4)

Race 13—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Coquette (2), Diamond Luster (11), Red Hot Water (9), Reign of Roses (5), Red Bells (12), El Cid (4)

Lagman, Asistio dispute Milo Cup 12-under title

TOP SEED JACOB LAGMAN whitewashed Kyle Parpan, 6-0, 6-0, and second pick Hans Asistio routed Vince Salas, 6-1, 6-2, yesterday to set up a championship showdown in the boys' 12-under division of the 2007 Milo Junior Tennis Cup at the Philam Homes Tennis Club in Quezon City.

Joana Peña routed Kim Tomacruz, 6-1, 6-1, and Chynna Mamawal blasted Rahnee Gael Joseph, 6-1, 6-0, to enter the girls' 16-under final.

In the boys' 14-under bracket, Arjohn dela Cruz needed a third-set super tiebreak to oust Enrique Ferrer, 3-6, 6-3, 12-10. The top-seeded Dela Cruz takes on Dheo Talatayod, who bested Kevin Mamawal, 6-1, 6-2, for the title.

Nic Fernandez upset No. 1 seed Novo Navarro, 7-6, 7-5, to gain the boy's 21-under semifinals, along with Julius Lagman, a 6-1, 6-1 victor over Regie Mangaporo.

Patrick Arevalo ousted Jopy Mamawal, 6-2, 6-4, and forged a clash with Leander Lazaro, a 7-5, 6-4 winner over Duma Boloto.

MABL CHAMPS

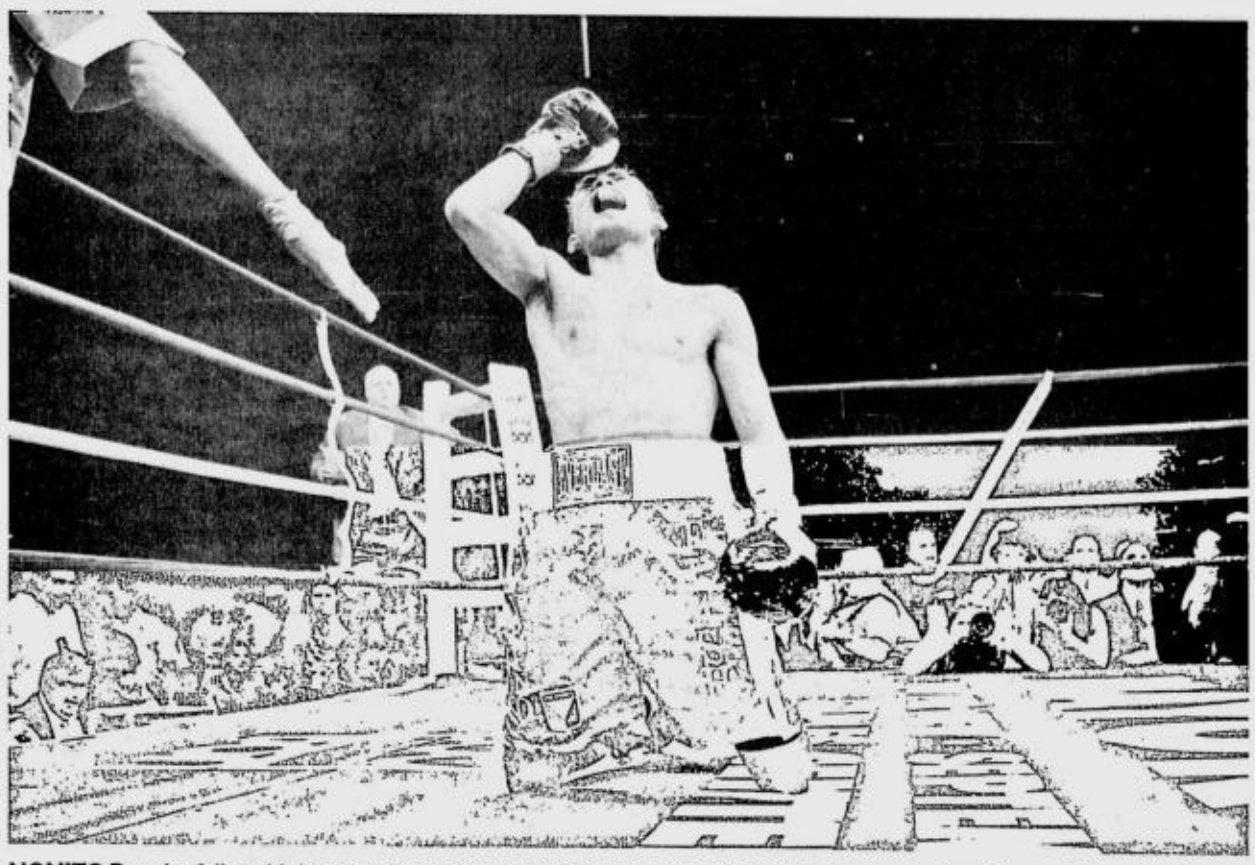
Members of the Mighty Menthols pose for posterity after winning the MABL Champions League for the second straight time. They are coaches Lito Vergara and Mark Victoria, Harlan Yu, Grech Go, Terence Tang, Clark Torrente, Eric Yao, Royd Tan, Donnel Ong, Geo Sia, Marvin Sioco, Wowie Evangelista. In the front row are Angelo Wongchuking, Edrick Ferrer, Fritz Dy, Jean Alabanza, Keith Wongchuking, Joseph Whang, Rand Chu, Fritz Dy and Dominic Uy.

Inquirer Sports' top choices for 2007

10 of the best

Boxers, golfers shine; SEA Games bets flop

By Francis T.J. Ochoa



NONITO Donaire falls to his knees as he celebrates his fifth-round knockout victory over Vic Darchinyan of Australia during the IBF flyweight championship in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Donaire's feat kicked off a world title romp for the country, which ended the year with four world champions.

IF IT WERE UP TO MANNY PACQUIAO'S FANS, THE definitive moment of Philippine sports in the year 2007 should have been captured this way in a photograph: The Filipino ring sensation, sweat dripping down a finely chiseled body that had earlier struggled to make the weight, standing over a fallen Marco Antonio Barrera, yet another Mexican Hall-of-Famer who had hoped to conquer the Pacman.

Instead, it ended up with Pacquiao and Barrera caught in a snapshot sealing a brand-new friendship, moments after the Mexican somehow managed—albeit with the help of a little foul punch toward the end of their fight—to stay on his feet for 12 rounds against the jackhammer-like punches of the Filipino.

It seemed that in the midst of the knockout hopes and the flurry of pugilistic exchanges, only Freddie Roach saw what made Pacquiao's conquest of Barrera special.

"Manny boxed well and showed good footwork, which was what we worked at," said the American trainer. "Manny cut him off and moved him to the right, which was a beautiful thing."

The people manning the INQUIRER Sports desk saw the same thing and voted Pacquiao's story—and that of the country's newly minted world champions—as the year's sporting highlight.

Here, in nuggets, are the rest of the best—and the worst—of Filipino exploits in the sporting arena in 2007. The Sports desk ranked the 10 best stories according to their impact on local sports:

1. Donaire, 3 others world's best

Very few had heard of Nonito Donaire until the morning of July 8, when his story landed on the front pages of newspapers. The report, coming out of Bridgeport, Connecticut, stated that the Filipino-American had just given the Philippines a world title.

Donaire knocked out the undefeated Vic Darchinyan in the fifth round of a scheduled 12-rounder, claiming his Armenian-Australian victim's International Boxing Federation (IBF) flyweight title.

On that same day, another unheralded fighter made it two world crowns for the country. Florante Condes showed tremendous fighting heart in flooring champion Muhammad Rachman twice en route to snatching the IBF mini flyweight (105-lb) crown via a split decision, right in his opponent's hometown of Jakarta.

That kicked off what's to be a banner year for pro boxing in the country.

Gerry Peñalosa became the third Filipino world champion in two months, on Aug. 12, dethroning Mexican World Boxing Organization (WBO) bantamweight champion Jhonny Gonzalez with a seventh-round knockout at the Arco Arena in Sacramento, California, during the Philippines vs Mexico boxing dual meet, dubbed as the World Cup.

The 35-year-old former WBC super flyweight champion put away the Mexican for good with one punch to the body late in the seventh round.

And then late in the year, Donnie Nietes capped the RP world title spree by forging a unanimous decision triumph over previously undefeated Pornsawan Kratingdaenggym of Thailand to capture the WBO minimumweight crown at the Waterfront Cebu Hotel on Oct. 1.

For sheer hype—and cash purse—none of those bouts came even close to matching the enormity of the Pacquiao-Barrera match held in Las Vegas on Oct. 7. Or even Pacquiao's fight against Mexican Jorge Solis on Apr. 15 in San Antonio, Texas. Heck, they even failed to grab the same kind of spotlight as the battle Pacquiao waged—and lost—against the wispy Darlene Custodio for a seat in Congress.

But those fights have the one thing Pacquiao's battles, those inside the ring, sorely lacked, at least for the moment: a world title.

Pacquiao is scheduled to slug it out with reigning WBC super featherwight king Juan Manuel Marquez—the last of the Mexican greats standing in the way of his dictatorial rule in the super featherweight ranks.

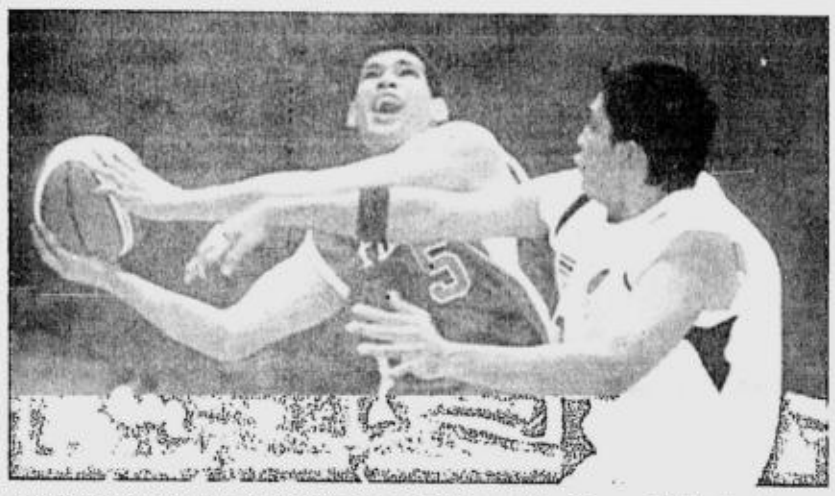
MIÑOZA: Seniors' tour next

2. Bittersweet basketball

After years of putting up with a dysfunctional Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP), sports officials and other major stakeholders of the sport decided to unite and take drastic action.

After years of mudslinging, band-aid solutions and politicizing, basketball finally found a new federation to rest its hopes on: The Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas (SBP).

After a Unity Congress that patched up the cracks in a fractured basketball landscape, the international basketball federation (Fiba) informed SBP president Manny V. Pangilinan that the federation was finally lifting its ban on Philippine participation in international tournaments. It was a ban that lasted two years and denied the country a gold-medal bid in the 2005 Manila Southeast Asian Games basketball competition.



AFTER dominating the Seaba tilt, Danny Seigle and the RP squad fail to book on Olympic berth at the Fiba Asia men's championship.

But the light of the inspiring breakthrough failed to put in the shadow the one ugly, glaring reality in basketball in the country: While Unity Congresses make for good photo-ops and program-hatchings, they don't put the country any closer to its cherished dream: An Olympic participation again.

"We have to be patient," Pangilinan said then. "The problems of basketball isn't going to be fixed overnight. It's going to take a really determined effort to improve Philippine basketball."

After a successful Seaba stint that flaunted the country's hoop might—sadly, only in the Southeast Asian region—the country's best shot at the Olympics came up via the Fiba Asia qualifier in Tokushima, Japan.

There, the Olympic dreams of a nation lay crushed under the wealth of Asian talent.

With China seeded into the Olympics by virtue of its hosting the 2008 edition, Philippine hopes soared as an extra slot was made available for Asia. All the country needed to do was win the qualifier.

Unfortunately, even after an inspiring victory over a second-rate Chinese squad, the Philippines fell short, kicked out of the race during the elimination round by a pair of losses to rising Middle Eastern powers including Iran, which went on to win the Asian title and the Beijing ticket that went along with it.

> With China seeded into the **Olympics** by virtue of its hosting the 2008 edition, Philippine **hopes soared** as an extra slot was made available for Asia. All the country needed to do was win the qualifier

3. Sinking to the depths of SEA

Miguel Molina will always be remembered as the one face that saved the country's participation in the 24th Southeast Asian Games, which will go down as the edition of the biennial meet where a defending champion surrendered its crown faster than its athletes could get to the finish line.

After claiming 113 gold medals in 2005, the year the Philippines hosted the small-time meet among members of the Southeast Asian community, the country tumbled to its worst finish ever, collecting just 41 gold medals to finish in sixth place.

"We prepared hard, but the rest prepared harder," POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco and PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez both said.

Molina was half of the main story of that SEA Games. And his was a story to be proud of. Trained in the United States, Molina won four gold medals as the country proved its might in swimming competitions.

The other half of the story? The boxing team. Depending on where you're looking from, the national boxing squad, hyped as the country's best chance to end an Olympic gold-medal drought, was either a turncoat who treated the Games as a freebie supplied by taxpayers' money or a patriot who let it be known that Filipinos were not going to take an assault on its pride sitting down.

Threatening to boycott the Games in the northern Thai province of Nakhon Ratchasima after its women fighters got whitewashed by Thai counterparts—save for Annie Albania's knockout triumph—the RP boxing team instead decided to show up for the men's finals. However, the male fighters, plucked from the "B" ranks of the national pool, either walked off their match or surrendered midway.

While officials and other parties were quick to defend the move as a stand against cheating, a lot also indicted the RP boxing team on charges of farcically disgracing the Philippine participation in the SEA Games.

In between Molina's heroics and boxing's debacle were stories of triumph and defeat. For every Jaime Asok who drug-rehabbed his way out of a nightmare and into a gold medal, there was a bowling squad that competed in a trail of controversy and paid dearly for it. For every Cecil Mamiit who fought tenaciously to fell a well-funded foe and win the tennis singles gold, there was an athletics squad that fell way short of expectations.

4. Frankie and Juvic

For the longest while, Philippine golf has been hoisted on the shoulders of the fashionable Jennifer Rosales and Fil-Am Dorothy Delasin, who have managed to carve their niche—however small—in the US LPGA.

Men's golf? It seemed that it was consigned to feeding off past successes of its greats.

And then this year, everything started to turn around. While Rosales and Delasin fell off the LPGA radar, with hardly anything to show for the 2007 season, the country's male golfers started to make their mark in Asia.

Frankie Miñoza and Juvic Pagunsan made Oct. 28 a red-letter day for Philippine golf, winning tournaments in Asia that was an end of a drought for one and a breakthrough for another.

Miñoza ended a six-year drought in the cash-rich Japanese Tour in the most dramatic of fashions. He proved steadier than Korean Lee Dong-hwa, claiming a victory with a birdie on the first hole of a sudden-death playoff for the ABC Championship in Hyogo prefecture after both players ended up tied at 274.

It was the first championship in Japan for Miñoza—who won this year's Philippine Open for the second time last February—since ruling the Fujisankei Classic in 2001, a long drought for a man many line up alongside the legendary greats of the sport.

Miñoza later said that he would try his hand in the PGA seniors tour once he becomes eligible for it age-wise.

Pagunsan, on the other hand, is just at the beginning of what many expect to be a lucrative golfing career. The many-time national team standout has already made his presence felt on the Asian circuit, but had never scored a victory until he saw action in the Pertamina Indonesia President Invitational in Jakarta.

Ranged against the likes of Ryder Cup star Lee Westwood, the 29-year-old Pagunsan shot a blistering final-round 65 to hold off Westwood, who eventually finished third, runner-up Gaganjeet Bhullar of India and American Anthony Kang.

"I am speechless, it was the perfect finish for me," said Pagunsan. "I've enjoyed my time on the Asian Tour and this is what I've been waiting for in my career."

Miñoza and Pagunsan received cash windfalls for their achievements. Frankie's victory was worth about $210,300 (about P8.67 million) while Juvic pocketed $55,475. Pagunsan's victory also catapulted him him in the Asian Tour's UBS Order of Merit. From his spot at No. 80, Pagunsan ended the year inside the Top 20.

Juvic's victory came after Antonio Murakami, whom Miñoza had also rated highly, also became a first-time winner on the Asian Tour by topping the Iskandar Johor Open in Malaysia in October.

Tony Lascuña also performed strongly in the Asian circuit even as Mars Pucay and Angelo Que scored victories in the inaugural edition of the Asean Golf Tour.

5. He isn't so-so, this Wesley

If the grandmaster title is chess' version of immortality, then Wesley So has already achieved an ageless status.

On Dec. 7, after a relatively unspectacular draw with Iranian GM Ehsan Ghaem Maghami in the final round of the Prospero Pichay International Open chess tournament, So finally completed his GM requirements.

He thus became the country's newest grandmaster, one of two players to achieve that feat this year. Darwin Laylo, suspended earlier in the year for alleged game-fixing, also joined the ranks of chess masters of the highest order.

But what made So's feat spectacular is the fact that he was the seventh youngest chess player to achieve the status, completing his GM requirements at 14 years, one month and 28 days old. Likewise, he is currently the world's youngest GM.

He joins Eugene Torre, who became Asia's first GM in 1974, the late Rosendo Balinas (1976), Rogelio "Joey" Antonio Jr. (1998), Buenaventura "Bong" Villamayor (2000), Nelson Mariano (2004), Mark Paragua (2005) and Darwin Laylo (2007) on the elite list of Filipino GMs.

The 27-year-old Laylo clinched his GM title by landing seventh in the Asian Individual Chess Championship held at the Cebu International Convention Center in Mandaue City in September.

"This is a memorable year for local chess," said Pichay, who is president of the National Chess Federation of the Philippines. "We produced not only one but two GMs in a span of three months."

To be continued tomorrow

Simply perfect, these Patriots

New England nips New York Giants, sets four records

IN COMMAND: Tom Brady (No. 12), in a role that will most likely earn him MVP honors, gives out instructions on the way to quarterbacking the New England Patriots to history. REUTERS

EAST RUTHERFORD, NEW JERSEY—IN A FITTING FINish to Boston's magical year in sports, the New England Patriots—Bill Belichick's History Boys—last night recovered from a 12-point, second-half deficit and defeated the New York Giants, 38-35, to complete the first 16-0 regular season in the history of the National Football League.

TEDY Bruschi of the New England Patriots celebrates at the end of the game. AFP

Tom Brady set the record for touchdown passes in a season (50), Randy Moss set the record for touchdown catches (23), and the Patriots set the season scoring record (589 points). New England needs another Super Bowl trophy to make its case as the best team in football history.

"To be able to win 'em all is great," conceded the ever-stoic Belichick. "I'm happy about it. It's really exciting to be part of this."

Few games are likely to match the drama that unfolded before 79,110 witnesses at the Meadowlands. Meaningless in the standings, a game with no bearing on the playoffs, the Patriots and Giants played four quarters of bone-crushing, foot-to-the-floor football.

The big play came with 11:06 left, when Brady connected with a wide-open Moss on a 65-yard touchdown pass. The perfect parabola put the Patriots ahead for good, while simultaneously booting Peyton Manning and Jerry Rice from the record book. Significant records. Just like 16-0.

"I had to throw it as far as I could," said Brady. "It doesn't get any better than that. Everyone's got to enjoy this."

It was more than must-see TV. The game was a breakthrough television event on par with the Kennedy-Nixon debates and the first moonwalk. The game was broadcast on three national networks (first NFL simulcast since Super Bowl I in 1967) and aired on three Boston channels, plus the much-maligned NFL Network.

Now it's already an ESPN Classic and bound for the History Channel.

The Giants had been colored as cardboard cutouts, mere props in the coronation of the perfect Patriots. But Tom Coughlin's guys wanted to be giant killers. They wanted to slay the bullies who vaporized the rest of the NFL in 2007.

Not quite. Not with Brady (32 of 42 passing for 356 yards) on the attack. The Patriots quarterback capped what is certain to be an MVP season with the latest in a long line of comeback victories.

"What I'm most proud of is that we beat a playoff team on the road," said Brady.

There was a playoff atmosphere in and around Giants Stadium early in the evening. Many fans wearing Brady and Tedy Bruschi jerseys were spotted drinking beverages and huddling around open fires in the perimeter parking lots.

The Giants took the opening kickoff and marched 74 yards in seven plays to take a 7-0 lead in the fifth minute of play.

The Patriots answered with a 37-yard Stephen Gostkowski field goal, then took a 10-7 lead when Brady connected with Moss on a 4-yard TD pass at the start of the second. The TD officially made the 2007 Patriots the highest-scoring team in NFL history (previously held by the 1998 Vikings).

The Patriots regained the lead on a pair of field goals (45 and 37 yards) by Gostkowski, but Eli Manning led the Giants on an eight-play, 85 yard touchdown drive before intermission. Manning's three-yard TD strike to Kevin Boss gave the Giants a 21-16 lead at the half.

But Brady simply wouldn't let his team lose. Superman took the Patriots down the field on a 73-yard drive, capped by Laurence Maroney's 6-yard run to cut the margin to 28-23.

After the New England defense finally took a stand, Brady got the ball back and connected with Moss again. Twice, actually.

Seconds after Moss dropped a game-tying touchdown pass, Brady went back to his favorite target and found Moss wide open a second time. The result was the touchdown pass that shattered all the records and put the Patriots in the lead for good. *New York Times News Service*

Sharapova tunes up in Asian tilts

SINGAPORE—RUSSIAN STAR MARIA Sharapova plans to use low key matches in Singapore and Hong Kong to fine-tune her game before launching her Australian Open assault.

Sharapova said her Asian strategy was an attempt to go one better at next month's Australian Open, where she lost in the final in 2007 to American Serena Williams.

The world No. 5 plays an exhibition match later Sunday in Singapore against compatriot Anna Chakvetadze and then heads to Hong Kong for the star-studded JB Group Classic.

Six of the world's top 11 women players will face off in the Hong Kong tournament including sixth-ranked Chakvetadze, world No. 8 Venus Williams and No. 4 Ana Ivanovic.

"I am going to take every single match seriously because it is like I said, my only preparation for the Australian Open," Sharapova said.

The former US and Wimbledon champion has beaten Chakvetadze in all six previous encounters, but Sharapova is not taking anything for granted. Chakvetadze broke into the top 10 rankings for the first time this year. *AFP*

Celtics defense makes Jazz play off-key

SALT LAKE CITY—AS PAUL PIERCE walked off the hardwood court, he chanted over and over again, "Road warriors, road warriors!"

The Celtics advanced to 3-0 on their four-game West Coast trip with a 104-98 victory over the Jazz at a sold-out EnergySolutions Arena Saturday night. Boston improved to an NBA-best 25-3 record, winning its seventh straight road game and fifth straight overall. The loss was only the third at home this season in 13 games for Utah (16-16).

"This is a big win for us, man," Pierce said. "A lot of things didn't go our way. That's a tough team to guard. They shot the ball well. They're tough at home. The crowd was really into it. But some way, some how we found ways to get the win, man. It shows a lot about this team and we're learning more and more about ourselves every day."

Pierce scored all of his game-high 24 points, including two 3-pointers and 10 free throws, in the second half. Ray Allen scored 23 points and nailed five 3-pointers, Kevin Garnett added 15 points and nine rebounds, and the bench added 24 points. After giving up 56 points in the first half, the Celtics' top-ranked defense limited Utah to 42 points in the second.

"Any time you win, especially when it's a collective group, it's big," Garnett said.

While the Celtics rested in Utah Friday night, the struggling Jazz were hammered, 123-109, on the road to the Los Angeles Lakers. Andrei Kirilenko was out for last night's game with an injury. Jazz newcomer Kyle Korver, acquired in a trade from the Sixers Saturday, wasn't in town yet.

Even so, EnergySolutions Arena is one of the toughest places in the league for visiting teams.

"This is one of the hardest places to play," Garnett said. "This building has always been electrifying. I've always found it a pleasure playing here."

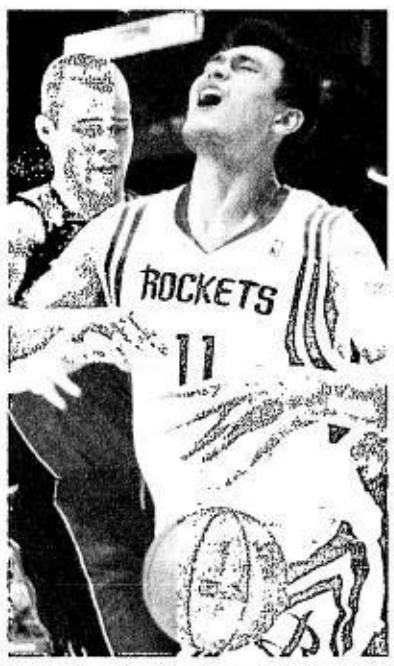
Utah entered the game fourth in the NBA in scoring with an average of 104.8 points per game. Boston entered with the NBA's top defense, allowing 86.3 points per game. The Jazz outscored the Celtics, 56-49, in the first half on 64.9-percent shooting.

"(The coaching staff) got on all of them defensively," coach Doc Rivers said. "They were shooting 65 percent at halftime. It's almost a bad thing when you score early like we were in the first five or six possessions and we got into a trade-a-basket mentality. That's not how we've played all year."

In Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki had 22 points, Josh Howard and Devin Harris each had 19, and the Dallas Mavericks led throughout in a 97-84 victory Saturday that snapped Atlanta's five-game winning streak.

Dallas made its first five shots, including 3-pointers by Howard and Nowitzki, to jump out to a 12-0 lead less than 2½ minutes into the game.

In other games, it was Pistons 98, Pacers 92; Wizards 96, Heat 74; Hornets 86, Cavaliers 76; Magic 104, Bobcats 95; Rockets 91, Raptors 79; Nets 97, Bucks 95; and SuperSonics 109, Timberwolves 90. *New York Times News Service, AP*



HOUSTON Rockets center Yao Ming (right) gets hammered by the Toronto Raptors' Kris Humphries. The Rockets beat the Raptors, 91-79. AP

SEASON OF GIVING: Toby's Sports and the Greenhills Rotary Club donate sports equipment and gift packs to kids housed at the Bahay Bagong Buhay Rehab Center for street children on drugs at Camp Bagong Diwa, Bicutan, Taguig. Joining the ceremonial donation were (from left) Toby Claudio (operations manager), Jojo Claudio (president), and Bobby Claudio (CEO and chair of the Toby's Group of Companies).

Real Spicy takes on all comers at Sta. Ana

LOCAL CHAMPION REAL SPICY WILL TAKE on imported thoroughbreds at the Grand Championship of the Santa Ana Park Stakes Series today at the Santa Ana Park.

Real Spicy, fresh from a victory over Native Land last week in the P1-million Philracom Yearend Invitational under the stewardship of jockey Jeffryl Zarate, and new import sensation Drama Belle (Australia) will lead the race that promises to be a classic showdown of the top contenders in the open handicap set.

Drama Belle topped the P4-million Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. Cup last November and bagged P2.4 million.

Set over a distance of 1,800-meters, two of the five previous leg winners of the 2007 Santa Ana Park Stakes will also bid for the championship crown and the P500,000 prize—first leg winner Irene's Fantasy (US) and fifth leg conqueror Copper Dew (US).

Completing the cast are Wild Orchid (Australia) and Fairy Queen (Australia).

Real Spicy's win in the Yearend Invitational race, which covered over 1,600-meters, was the 5-year-old's first after failing in six stakes races.

The son of Real Quiet and Spicy Tale ended the winning run of Native Land, who won the Marho Breeders Cup Classic and the Gold Cup recently.

To regain the attention that had shifted lately to rising three-year-olds like Es Twenty Six, Ibarra and juvenile stable mate Indelible Ink, Real Spicy must produce a performance worthy of the Horse of the Year award he won in 2006, observers say.

Four-year-old filly Drama Belle, meanwhile, will have to prove that her victory last month in the ECJ Cup was no fluke as she returns to action with retiring jockey Armando Lumagui on the saddle. A win for Drama Belle would already secure her the best import tag.

Emerging as the most credible threat for the premier spot is three-year-old US-bred filly Copper Dew.

Beautiful Mornings served daily.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Available from 6:30 am to 10:30 am
For every purchase of Breakfast Value Meal + Pie
Hotcake not included
Valid for Dine-in, Take-out and Drive Thru
Valid for Metro Manila stores only
Promo Period: October 25, 2007 - January 25, 2008
love ko 'to
GET YOUR COPY AT THESE PARTICIPATING BRANCHES: MALABON CONCEPCION - MUNOZ - MCU - PHILCOA - REGALADO - INTRAMUROS - STA. CRUZ - PEDRO GIL - LEPANTO - QUEZON AVE. - WEST AVENUE - PROJECT 8 - NORTH AVENUE - UN AVENUE - GEN. LUNA - EDSA ROTONDA - BACLARAN REDEMTORIST - QUIRINO TAFT - TM KALAW - SAN JOAQUIN - PATEROS BAYAN - SHELL - EMERALD - EL PUEBLO - STRATA 100 - GREENHILLS - MEGAMALL - BARANCCA - WILSON - EDSA BONI - EDSA IT CENTER - CUBAO - ALIMALL - FARMERS - KAMIAS - METROLANE - MARCOS HIGHWAY - ANTIPOLO - C & P MARIKINA - EASTWOOD - KATIPUNAN - VISAYAS AVE. - MATALINO - TOMAS MORATO - EDSA PANAY - GOV. FORBES - BANAUE - P. CAMPA - QA BANAUE - UST PARKING DECK - GREENBELT - VALERO - MCS - BUENDIA - EVANGELISTA - AYALA MRT - PEOPLE SUPPORT - MUNTI CITYHALL - LAS PINAS - KABIHASNAN - TIMES - AIRPORT ROAD - SUCAT PALANYAG - ALABANG - SOUTHMALL - NORTHGATE FASTBYTES - JP RIZAL - PACO - PRC - MAKATI AVE. - LIBERTAD - HOLIDAY PLAZA - BANKMER - KINGSWOOD - FORT BONI 32ND ST -

IN THIS ISSUE

Local bourse rewrites five stock records /B2

BCDA eyes development of 'second Global City' /B5

BUSINESS

Website: www.inquirer.net/business

Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

Text us your feedback: inquirer biz name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph

₱300-M budget surplus possible this year

Worst-case scenario is a deficit of only ₱15.1B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT IS POISED TO incur a budget deficit of only P15.1 billion this year under a worst-case scenario, or a surplus of P300 million under the best-case forecast of the Department of Finance.

Even under the worst-case forecast, the deficit would still be much lower than the P63-billion ceiling allowed under the 2007 fiscal program. Under the "medium-case" scenario, the government would record a deficit of P9.1 billion.

The figures are the government's official estimates and were presented by Finance Secretary Margarito Teves during a meeting of the board of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) last Friday.

The Neda Board includes officials from the Neda and the departments of Finance and Budget and Management. It is chaired by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"The three scenarios indicate that the target for the year would definitely be surpassed," an official from the DBM told reporters.

The government's better-than-target fiscal performance this year was largely due to income generated from the sale of state-owned assets. The government raised about P90 billion this year by selling its stakes in PNOC-Energy Development Corp., Philippine Telecommunications Investments Corp. and Philippine National Bank as well as the old Iloilo airport property.

Should the government meet the best-case forecast of a P300-million surplus, then it would overperform even its 2008 target of a balanced budget. Under the medium-term program of the government, it was supposed to reduce its deficit to P63 billion this year before totally wiping it out by 2008.

Privatization revenues more than offset the shortfalls in tax and duty collections of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs.

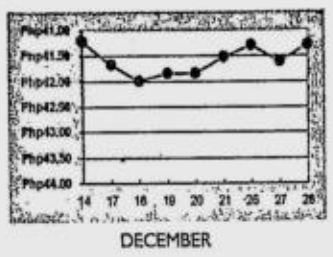
From January to November, the BIR collected P647.7 bil-

P300-M BUDGET/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



₱41.28 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 28, 2007

¥113.06 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 28, 2007

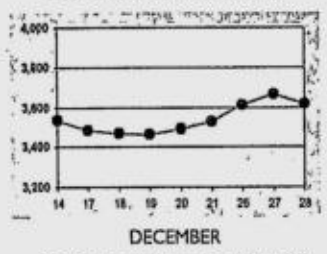
GOLD: $827.70-828.20

per ounce Hong Kong, Dec. 28, 2007

STOCK MARKET

Cautious trading seen

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

INVESTORS ARE SEEN TRACKING news from abroad when the market opens the new year with a shortened trading week, traders said.

Financial markets will be closed today and tomorrow for the New Year holidays.

"I think the market will remain hostaged by developments overseas. We saw profit-taking last week after four days of gains and the long weekend ahead. But there may be some positioning for 2008 on companies with good performances," said Astro del Castillo, managing director of First Grade Holdings Inc.

CAUTIOUS/ B2

BSP expects net loss of P41B this year

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas expects to end the year with a net loss of P41 billion, a turnaround from the P3.79 billion in net profit last year, due to heavy foreign exchange losses arising from the dollar's weakening against the peso.

A recent BSP report showed that for the full year, the central bank is expecting about P67 billion in losses from foreign exchange fluctuations, a reversal of the P3.8 billion in foreign exchange gains in 2006.

But the BSP expects to trim its full-year net loss from the P45.6-billion deficit recorded from January to October partly due to a decline in interest expense on its overnight borrowings and special deposit facility following three consecutive months of interest rate cuts, monetary officials explained.

Since October this year, the central bank has slashed its key policy rates by 75 basis points, bringing down the benchmark overnight borrowing rate to a record low of 5.25 percent.

BSP/ B3

Local bourse rewrites five stock market records

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE (PSE) ended 2007 with a bang, posting five new stock market records.

PSE president Francis Lim said the market's sustained growth helped rewrite the yearend level of the main index, market capitalization, value turnover and proceeds from capital-raising activities.

The PSE index (PSEi), the main barometer of local stock price movements, surged 21.4 percent to 3,621.6 points at the end of 2007 from 2,982.54 in 2006.

The PSEi's closing level erased the previous yearend record set in 1993 at 3,196.08 and marked the fifth straight year that the main index advanced.

The PSEi expanded by 42.3 percent in 2006, by 15 percent in 2005, by 26.4 percent in 2004 and by 41.6 percent in 2003.

Turnover surged to P1.34T in '07

Annual value turnover also hit an all-time high of P1.34 trillion, a record never before seen in PSE history. At P1.34 trillion, value turnover was 133 percent more than the P572.63 billion recorded in 2006.

Average daily value turnover jumped by 136.6 percent to P5.48 billion in 2007 from P2.32 billion in 2006.

Market capitalization, on the other hand, reached P7.98 trillion in 2007, or 11.2-percent higher than the P7.17 trillion in 2006.

Domestic market capitalization went up by 27.3 percent to P4.27 trillion to beat the previous yearend high of P3.35 trillion set in 2006.

Proceeds from public offerings and other means of raising capital for listed companies went up to an all-time high of P89.85 billion in 2007, or 57-percent higher than the old annual record high of P57.23 billion in 2006.

"I am confident that we can sustain our market's advance, provided we keep in place our strong macroeconomic support and we shield our market from adverse developments in the domestic and global fronts," Lim said.

P300-M budget surplus possible this year

From page B1

lion in taxes, short by P53.3 billion of its target for the 11-month period. This kept the BIR off-track to meet its full-year goal of P765.9 billion.

The failure of the BIR, the biggest revenue earner among line agencies, to meet its collection target was blamed partly on unmet economic assumptions. The BIR said the lower-than-projected inflation rate dragged down collection of the value-added tax, while the drop in interest rates adversely affected collection of the tax on income from bank deposits.

Inflation was assumed to average between 4 and 5 percent this year, but has so far settled at 2.7 percent in the first 11 months of the year.

The strengthening of the peso also led to lower-than-target collection of import duties by the Customs bureau. The BOC said it loses P2.7 billion in potential revenue collection for every peso of appreciation of the local currency against the dollar.

Aside from unrealized economic forecasts, collection inefficiency, corruption and dishonesty among taxpayers were also blamed for the anemic tax collection.

Cautious trading seen

From page B1

AB Capital Securities said in a research note that stocks ended the year 2007 on a sour note as renewed geopolitical concerns resurfaced after the assassination of former Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

The Philippine Stock Exchange index followed the regional downturn, tumbling 46.04 points or 1.3 percent to 3,621.60 on Friday. The all-share index also ended lower by 26.37 points or 1.2 percent to 2,216.75.

"Stocks may start the year 2008 on a cautious note due to the recent events in Pakistan. Renewed geopolitical concerns have sparked a rise in world crude oil prices. Losses may be trimmed by some minor positioning as stocks typically move higher on the first month of the year," AB Capital Securities wrote.

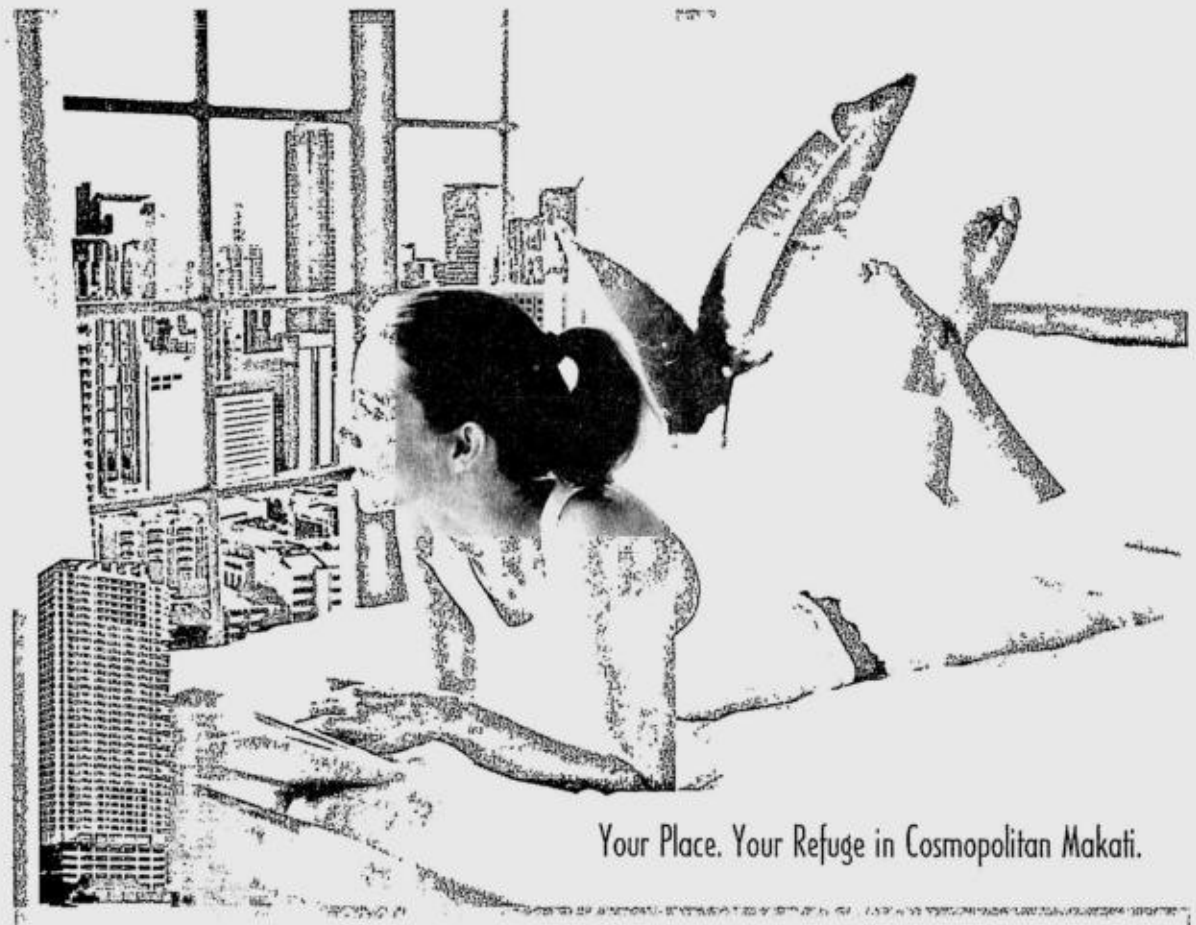
Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

CURRENCIES

December 28, 2007

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.683667	1.000000	41.4010
Japan	Yen	0.006014	0.008796	0.3642
United Kingdom	Pound	1.364668	1.996100	82.6405
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.087650	0.128205	5.3078
Switzerland	Franc	0.599971	0.877578	36.3326
Canada	Dollar	0.697122	1.019680	42.2158
Singapore	Dollar	0.471657	0.689893	28.5623
Australia	Dollar	0.599498	0.876885	36.3039
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.820636	2.663045	110.2527
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.182409	0.266809	11.0462
Brunei	Dollar	0.470036	0.687521	28.4641
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000072	0.000106	0.0044
Thailand	Baht	0.022942	0.033557	1.3893
UAE	Dirham	0.186154	0.272287	11.2730
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.462700	60.5572
Korea	Won	0.000727	0.001064	0.0441
China	Yuan**	0.093429	0.136659	5.6578
Denmark	Kroner	0.134150	0.196221	8.1237
India	Rupee	0.017414	0.025471	1.0545
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.205182	0.300120	12.4253
New Zealand	Dollar	0.526505	0.770119	31.8837
Sweden	Kroner	0.105703	0.154612	6.4011
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.021021	0.030747	1.2730

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Dec. 27, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Dec. 27, 2007



Studio Unit (21sqm)
As low as
₱9,000+/mo
1-BR Unit (30sqm)
As low as
₱13,000+/mo
with HOME 365

Within the beautiful and expansive Belton Square township project is a residential enclave that puts your needs above all else.

Belton Place is simply a breath of fresh air in a prime corner along Pasong Tamo, Malugay and Yakal Streets. Come home to your unit's very own WELLNESS CENTER where the ultimate in pampering begins with beauty, serenity and tranquility. Indulge yourself to well-deserved treatments at the medi-spa, massage center, health and beauty center and therapeutic clinics.

Soothe your senses. Let your spirits soar. Only at your very own Belton Place.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 28, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	6.8	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	37,000
73	44	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	60	61	60	60.5	524,800
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	61	62.5	60.5	61.5	2,356,100
748	544	China Banking Corp.	665	665	660	660	300
25	14	Citystate Savings Bank	24.75	25	24.75	25	2,000
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.38	280,000
75.5	47.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	55	56	54	54.5	1,040,400
65.5	39	Philippine National Bank	49.5	50	49	50	409,600
68	48	Philippine Savings Bank	57.5	58.5	57	58.5	49,400
39.57	20.43	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	24	24	23.5	24	340,000
90	65	Security Bank Corp.	77.5	78.5	77.5	78.5	80,100
66	42	Union Bank of the Philippines	43	43	42.5	43	116,600
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.92	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	188,000
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.8	1.8	120,000
16.25	4.6	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	11	11	10.75	11	121,000
1.6	0.55	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.96	1	0.95	1	690,000
5.9	4.6	I-Remit Inc.	4.75	4.75	4.65	4.7	33,000
6.8	1.74	Makati Finance Corp.	3.05	4	3	4	23,000
5	2.7	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.3	3.35	3.2	3.3	8,313,000
3.1	1.32	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.76	1.8	232,000
1,390.00	277.5	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	1,020.00	1,060.00	1,010.00	1,020.00	9,770
2,500.00	1,970.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,260.00	2,260.00	2,260.00	2,260.00	200
1.94	1.3	Vantage Corp.	1.72	1.76	1.7	1.76	5,214,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.1	5.3	5.1	5.3	5,571,000
70.5	49	First Gen Corp.	60	60	59	59.5	1,456,000
92	58	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	72.5	73.5	71	72.5	342,100
19	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	18.75	18.75	18.5	18.5	1,263,700
105.45	48.64	Manila Electric Co.	82	83	82	82.5	408,200
7.8	4.3	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.7	6.8	6.4	6.5	22,027,000
7.4	3.95	Petron Corp.	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.7	9,566,000
2.5	1.7	SPC Power Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	37,000
2.04	0.94	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.24	1,163,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.4	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.2	215,000
2.32	1.46	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.52	1.52	1.46	1.48	1,008,000
2.2	1.08	CADP Group Corp.	1.84	1.88	1.84	1.88	15,000
28.5	20	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26	26	26	26	20,000
61	41	Jollibee Foods Corp.	52	52	52	52	719,600
10	6	Pancake House Inc.	9.5	10	9.5	10	13,000
0.98	0.51	RFM Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	200,000
3.1	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	1,500,000
80	42.5	San Miguel Corp. "A"	59.5	60	58.5	59	2,110,100
88	43	San Miguel Corp. "B"	59	59.5	59	59.5	219,500
6.5	3	Tanduay Holdings Inc.	4.2	5.8	4.2	5.8	6,000
20.75	13.5	Universal Robina Corp.	14	14	13.75	14	907,300
0.55	0.24	Vitarich Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	60,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	2.65	EEI Corp.	3.9	4	3.8	4	3,047,000
9.2	4.95	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.7	7.7	422,000
7	3.65	Republic Cement Corp.	4	4	4	4	35,000
2	0.81	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	0.98	1.02	0.97	1	1,890,000
23	2.12	TKC Steel Corp.	8.8	9	8.7	9	477,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.75	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.2	106,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
4	2.5	Active Alliance Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	10,000
0.75	0.19	Picop Resources Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.32	5,910,000
9	6.2	Splash Corp.	7.9	7.9	7.6	7.7	289,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
39	18.75	ABS-CBN Holdings Corp.-PDR	33	33	33	33	200
3.9	2.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	305,000
0.185	0.0575	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.11	0.115	16,610,000
1.28	0.3	APC Group Inc.	0.59	0.6	0.59	0.59	8,460,000
3.65	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.4	2.48	2.4	2.48	14,000
3.7	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	30,000
0.0182	0.0076	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.011	44,400,000
0.019	0.0085	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.012	0.012	0.01	0.01	2,500,000
9.7	5.8	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.8	7	6.8	6.9	4,116,000
0.021	0.01	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.014	16,100,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.5	5.7	5.4	5.6	9,887,000
1.38	0.61	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.69	0.69	600,000
2.9	1.04	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.2	2.28	2.2	2.24	811,000
8	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	3.5	3.5	3.2	3.2	33,000
645	400	Ayala Corp.	550	565	545	565	237,580
15.25	8.09	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	14	14.25	14	14.25	42,500
5.8	2.14	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.65	4.65	4.45	4.6	20,300,000
12	5.9	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9.7	9.8	9.6	9.6	3,617,000
8	3.5	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.2	5.2	4.9	4.9	487,000
3.55	1.76	House of Investments Inc.	2	2	2	2	760,000
14.5	8.9	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	10.5	11.5	10.5	11.5	1,005,000
28	1.42	Lodestar Investment Hldgs Corp.	16	16	16	16	1,000
0.95	0.32	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	70,000
11.5	1.5	Minerales Industrias Corp.	6.3	6.3	6	6.1	1,032,000
8.5	3.1	PAL Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	10,000
0.28	0.016	Pacifica Inc. "A"	0.205	0.205	0.2	0.205	37,340,000
1.54	0.62	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	130,000
0.75	0.19	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	130,000
2.1	1.3	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	10,000
452.5	294.91	SM Investments Corp.	350	355	340	340	155,540
2.1	1.08	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	27,000
0.73	0.155	Sinophil Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	1,930,000
1.06	0.61	Solid Group Inc.	0.73	0.75	0.73	0.75	60,000
9	0.93	Vivant Corp.	9	9	6.1	7	437,000
0.75	0.12	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.27	0.3	0.27	0.3	1,980,000
		PROPERTY					
2.38	1	A Brown Co. Inc.	2.08	2.14	2.08	2.1	1,581,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	28,000
19.25	12.08	Ayala Land Inc.	14.75	14.75	14.25	14.25	12,106,700
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.2	2,127,000
4.7	3.15	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.6	623,000
0.86	0.41	Crown Equities Inc.	0.58	0.6	0.58	0.6	250,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	1,360,000
1.05	0.56	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.81	0.79	0.8	11,770,000
6.9	1.12	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.9	225,000
0.47	0.0575	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	320,000
1.48	0.62	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.91	0.91	5,820,000
2.44	1.22	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.34	1.38	1.32	1.36	75,999,000
3.3	2.44	Highlands Prime Inc.	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.8	460,000
1.12	0.31	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.46	0.46	3,030,000
4.6	2.26	Megaworld Corp.	4.05	4.05	3.75	3.75	70,671,000
5.8	3.2	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.35	4.45	4.35	4.4	792,000
0.7	0.15	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.3	0.32	0.3	0.31	450,000
0.86	0.32	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.47	0.49	0.47	0.47	840,000
9.2	1.7	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	40,000
23	14.5	Robinson Land Corp.	16	16.5	16	16.5	3,418,500
5.9	2.17	SM Development Corp.	3.6	3.65	3.55	3.55	674,000
13.5	8.4	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	10.75	10.75	10.25	10.25	19,903,700
3.25	1.5	Shang Properties Inc.	2.18	2.48	2.18	2.22	514,000
4.5	0.38	Sta. Lucia Land Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.6	1.6	50,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.58	0.59	0.57	0.57	850,000
0.49	0.0975	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.245	0.245	0.23	0.23	420,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	5.8	6	5.8	6	10,070,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	18.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	32.5	32.5	32	32.5	5,600
12	7.4	GMA Holdings Inc.	7.9	8	7.4	7.4	2,150,000
11.75	7.5	GMA Network Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.6	7.7	1,793,000
1.03	0.81	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.86	0.86	80,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.78	1.84	1.72	1.84	61,468,000
1,750.00	1,180.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,590.00	1,605.00	1,555.00	1,570.00	142,790
3,285.00	2,250.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	3,180.00	3,205.00	3,140.00	3,175.00	194,110
8.1	5.5	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	7.7	7.7	7.5	7.5	20,572,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	7,920,000
16.5	2.1	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	14.5	14.75	14	14.5	362,600
11.5	3.55	IPVG Corp.	7.5	7.9	7.5	7.9	845,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.036	0.038	0.036	0.037	768,700,000
29.5	9.5	Imperial Resources Inc. "A"	16.75	17	16.5	17	5,000
2.9	1.1	Ionics Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	27,000
0.32	0.05	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.17	1,180,000
2.26	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	294,000
0.0725	0.03	Philweb Corp.	0.044	0.045	0.044	0.045	47,700,000
4.7	1.64	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l Inc.	2.36	2.4	2.36	2.36	1,126,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.18	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	383,000
6.8	3.6	Asian Terminals Inc.	4	4.1	3.95	4	5,055,000
49	20	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	45	46	45	45.5	750,500
2.3	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	2.16	2.16	2	2	123,000
2.7	1.12	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.68	1.68	73,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.02	2.3	2.02	2.22	45,000
6	2.16	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	10,000
4.55	2.9	Philippine Racing Club Inc.	4	4	3.55	3.55	52,000
1.52	0.33	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.2	1.2	972,000
1.2	0.55	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	1,160,000
		EDUCATION					
9.4	5.5	Centro Escolar University	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	1,000
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	122,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	2.04	Macroasia Corp.	4.95	5	4.9	5	446,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.25	10.5	272,200
30	5.3	Paxys Inc.	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.9	564,000
472.5	350	eTelecare Global Solutions Inc.	395	400	395	400	2,710
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.0095	0.01	106,000,000
7.2	3.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	6.3	6.4	6.2	6.4	315,000
7.4	3.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	6.4	6.9	6.4	6.9	707,000
21.25	8.1	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	13.75	14	13.5	14	2,008,000
21.5	8.9	Benguet Corp. "A"	21	21.5	20.5	21	437,200
12.75	2.42	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	8.1	8.2	7.9	8	288,000
3.1	0.6	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	1.78	1.8	1.74	1.8	28,485,000
0.56	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.51	0.53	0.5	0.53	122,360,000
0.61	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.52	0.53	0.51	0.52	79,830,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.028	0.029	0.028	0.029	52,400,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.029	0.031	0.029	0.031	68,000,000
30	3.6	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	19.5	19.5	18.75	18.75	329,000
0.021	0.01	Omico Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	64,000,000
0.15	0.007	Omico Corp.-Warrants	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.009	14,000,000
3.4	3	Oriental Peninsula Resources Group Inc.	3.35	3.35	3.3	3.3	10,701,000
11.25	3.5	Philex Mining Corp.	9.6	9.7	9.4	9.5	7,240,000
49.5	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	45.5	47	42.5	44	2,414,500
1.36	0.65	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.74	0.75	0.72	0.75	1,500,000
1.7	0.99	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	1,746,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.27	Basic Energy Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	780,000
0.029	0.011	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.024	166,100,000
0.03	0.012	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.025	61,100,000
13.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.9	9.9	9.8	9.8	264,000
0.032	0.01	The Philodrill Corp.	0.03	0.031	0.03	0.031	211,300,000

	AVERAGES		VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	864.37 DOWN	9.95	20,157,270	326,645,850.00
Industrial	4,422.22 DOWN	67.39	61,015,500	622,892,165.00
Holding Firms	2,036.59 DOWN	9.95	173,627,620	441,119,115.00
Property	1,470.57 DOWN	60.96	224,392,900	903,595,305.00
Service	1,901.40 DOWN	2.04	922,446,510	1,235,849,870.00
Mining & Oil	8,375.10 DOWN	7.89	988,304,700	443,464,635.00
All Shares Index	2,216.75 DOWN	26.37		
PSEI	3,621.60 DOWN	46.04		
		GRAND TOTALS	2,389,944,500	3,973,566,940.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

Heed lessons of 1997 crisis, ADB urges East Asia

By Doris C. Dumlao

BOOMING STOCK MARKETS and property prices are making consumers in East Asia feel wealthier, but government economic managers should watch out for excesses that could lead to spiraling inflation, the Asian Development Bank said.

In a special feature "Asset Markets and the Real Economy" published in its December Asia economic monitor, the ADB urged East Asia to keep in mind the lessons from the currency turmoil of 1997 that wreaked havoc on Thailand, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia and the Philippines.

"... A sustained period of asset price inflation often undermines financial sector soundness, even if those gains appear broadly justified by fundamentals," the ADB said. "With surging asset prices and increasingly sizable asset markets, the main challenge for macroeconomic policy in emerging East Asia is to prevent any financial market excess from spilling over to goods and services markets, thus threatening macroeconomic stability."

In the case of the Philippines, the ADB noted that stock market capitalization had surged to about 125 percent of gross domestic product at present from only 59 percent in 2001.

A similar boom is seen elsewhere in East Asia, defined as the region which includes Southeast Asia (of which the Philippines is part of), the People's Republic of China and the four newly industrialized economies of Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan.

The ADB urged East Asian governments to remain focused on containing inflationary pressures and expectations, and strengthening financial market regulation and supervision to address risks associated with asset price booms.

"Prudential measures, such as tightening lending standards and criteria, could limit the speculative participation that may lead to misalignment of asset prices and the consequent price collapse," the ADB said.

The ADB said tightening supervisory policies could also be helpful, "as they can target problem sectors more closely, while limiting the risk of derailing economic growth by using monetary policy that can have long-lasting and much broader macroeconomic consequences."

Since 2001, stock prices has doubled and property values soared in East Asia, raising some concerns about surging asset prices and the potential impact on economic activity of a major correction in these markets. Property prices are rising fast as well.

Higher asset prices increase the wealth of consumers, boosting consumer confidence and encouraging higher spending. Stronger asset values would also improve firms' and banks' balance sheets and thus induce banks to charge lower premiums or increase the size of loans. At the same time, booming stock markets encourage corporate investment by lowering the cost of funding.

"Empirical research shows that the wealth effect of asset prices, though small, is significant in emerging East Asia," the ADB said.

A 10-percent rise in real stock prices was estimated to increase private consumption by about 0.2-0.3 percent, similar in magnitude to estimates for industrialized countries.

"The 1997 Asian financial crisis was a vivid example that soaring asset prices, pushed by large capital inflows, increased the leverage of borrowers and expanded investment through the financial accelerator channel, contributing to financial and economic volatility," the ADB said.

New Year's debt

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

THERE IS A COMMON *pamahiin* (folk belief) that one should pay off one's debts before the start of a new year, or face a whole year of being in debt.

I must admit I used to go by this rule myself and made a special effort to settle my debts before year's end—until I started using credit cards and realized that there was no way I could stay out of debt anyway, no matter how big or small.

How is our debt situation as we leave 2007 behind and enter the new year 2008? We can look at this on two levels: The national level and the personal level. The available data tell us that the debt situation appears to be easing at the national level; on the personal level, though, things appear to be getting worse.

The crisis then

First, the good news. We have come a long way since that time a couple of years ago when UP economists called attention to the fiscal crisis that was before us.

That was a time when the total amount spent by the government to service our public debt, combining both interest payments and amortization of principal, was literally equivalent to P9 of every P10 of revenue collected by the government.

The numbers, which I wrote about in this space then, were P301.7 billion for interest payments and P344 billion for principal amortization, summing up to P646 billion total debt service payments.

That's 88.5 percent, or roughly 9 out of 10, of the P730 billion in revenues collected then. That was, indeed, a crisis situation by anyone's standard.

Not very many people realized how bad it really was then, as the more commonly cited figure is the share of the government budget going to interest payments, which was just about one-third or 34 percent then.

But this ignored the principal part of the debt payments, while using the bigger denominator of government budget, which is revenues plus the P120 billion budget deficit then.

Even so, this ratio was bad enough as it was, implying that for every three pesos spent by the government, only two went to "productive" spending.

Improved ratios

Fast forward to the present, and we see a totally different, and much improved, picture.

For 2007, the projected combined debt service-to-revenue ratio is just 55 percent, and for the proposed 2008 budget, down further to 50 percent. That's down to one out of two, from 9 out of 10. (It had first gone down to 82 percent, or roughly four out of five, in 2006.)

Even the share of the proposed 2008 budget going to interest payments will go down to 20 percent or just one-fifth, from the earlier one-third.

Why this positive reversal of fortunes? Credit it to both the expanded VAT and the appreciating peso. The additional P80 billion or so that the higher VAT brought in helped break us out of the vicious circle of debt we were caught in two years ago.

But it also helped a great deal that the peso value of our foreign debt payments had substantially gone down due to the steep drop in the peso-dollar exchange rate, which was at P56 in mid-2005 and now down to the P41 level.

Both factors have meant a sacrifice for us, and unfortunately, both entailed a relatively greater sacrifice for lower-income Filipinos than richer ones.

That is, the higher VAT hit the poor more than the rich in relative terms. Similarly, the lower exchange rate has impacted more heavily on lower-income Filipinos, especially workers in firms producing tradable goods and OFW families subsisting on foreign remittances.

Personal debt

This leads me to the bad news, this time on the side of personal debt.

While the public debt situation seems to be improving, Bangko Sentral data suggest that Filipinos are both heavier in debt, and less able to pay for it. Data released last week show that credit card receivables rose by 22.6 percent over last year to P106 billion, much faster than the 7.1-percent growth in overall incomes (as measured by GDP).

Along with this steep rise in indebtedness came a rise in overdue credit card receivables, which went up 7.7 percent over the past quarter—almost twice a fast as the overall growth in credit card debt (3.9 percent) itself.

The same picture emerges from BSP data on car loans. These grew by 22.2 percent from last year, which is good news for the car industry.

The bad news, though, is that overdue car loans went up more than twice as fast (10.8 percent) as the growth in overall car loans (5.3 percent) over the past quarter. That is, car loan borrowers are increasingly unable to pay up.

Puzzling disconnect

The overall picture that emerges, then, is that while the debt burden is easing for the government and the country as a whole, the opposite is true for individual Filipino borrowers.

This is yet another one of the puzzling "disconnects" between the seemingly good economic news on the macro level, and the not-so-good news at the level of the common Filipino.

But not nearly as puzzling, I guess, as the other New Year *pamahiin* that says you'll have a year of bad luck if the first person you meet in the new year is female, but good luck if it is a male you first encounter (ever heard that one before?).

A happy, prosperous and debt-free (unlikely as it may seem) New Year to one and all!

(Comments are welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu.)

Maximize Your Dollar & Peso Growth Potential!

Philam Equitable Life Assurance Company

Preferred Dollar Plus | Preferred Peso Plus | Multiply | Dollar Multiply

Investment Funds of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Valuation Date 12/27/07	Valuation Date 12/20/07
PELAC Dollar Bond Fund	1.3321	1.3294
PELAC Global Bond Fund	1.2216	1.2223
PELAC Peso Fixed Income Fund	1.0747	1.0692
PELAC Peso Equity Fund	1.3568	1.2986
PELAC Balanced Fund	1.0140	0.9762

These investment funds are specific to variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

*Fund prices are net of transaction costs

PSBank Peso TIME DEPOSIT

Deposit Amount	Interest Rates	
In Pesos	Less than 1 Year	1 Year
100,000 - 499,999	3.50	3.50
500,000 - 999,999	3.75	3.75
1.0MM - 4.99MM	4.50	4.50
5.0MM - 9.99MM	4.75	4.75
10.0MM and up	5.00	5.00

Rates are subject to change without prior notice, on per annum basis and net of documentary stamp taxes

Manage your account online via PSBank Remote Banking.
Open a time deposit now in any of 163 branches nationwide.

For more information, text PSBANK PTD <your name> <landline no > <email address> then send to 391-772 for Smart or 0917-8902327 for Globe and other networks, or visit our website at www.psbank.com.ph

Member of the PDIC Maximum Deposit Insurance for each Depositor is P250,000.

BSP expects ₱41-B loss this year

From page B1

The BSP is incurring heavy foreign exchange losses this year given its "long" (buy) position on the dollar that resulted in the rapid build-up of its gross international reserves to record-highs. The GIR is expected to hit $33 billion at the end of this year.

The GIR is a key indicator of a country's ability to cover the foreign exchange requirements of the economy, consisting of the BSP's gross foreign currency holdings, gold reserves, foreign investments and special drawing rights from multilateral institutions like the International Monetary Fund.

Given expectations of sustained foreign exchange inflows, the BSP expects a higher GIR range of $35-$37 billion in 2008. As of end-November, the GIR amounted to $32.5 billion.

The BSP is even curbing the rapid build-up in the GIR by locking up some of the foreign exchange bought from the open market in currency swap contracts. This is to prevent the equivalent peso from pouring into the financial system, effectively delaying the conversion of foreign inflows into the local currency.

The central bank has been forced to buy more dollars from the spot foreign exchange market to curb the peso's sharp appreciation. The peso, Asia's best performing currency this year, has gained 18 percent against the greenback to end 2007 at 41.28 to $1.

The country has been receiving at least $1 billion in monthly foreign inflows from overseas Filipino workers. These remittances historically peak in the fourth quarter because of the Christmas season, the country's longest and most extravagant holiday.

Aside from the OFW inflows, net inflows of foreign portfolio investments—or those placed in local stocks, bonds and money market instruments—have returned to positive levels in September.

INFOTECH

E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph

Text us your feedback: inquirer it name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Music and games, N81 8GB plays both

WITH a mix of dedicated keys and front-panel buttons that double up as console-style controls, the N81 8GB is one of the first to handle Nokia's revamped N-Gage mobile gaming platform.

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

IT SEEMS ONLY YESterday when Nokia launched the N-Series, the Finnish company's high-end smart phones that offer loads of advanced entertainment options and other productivity tools.

The N81 8GB is one of the most recent addition to this family (that also include the N95, N93i and N77).

It resembles the N95 although it features a more straightforward, one-way slider mechanism with music player controls arranged around the central navigation keypad rather than under a separate cover.

THE N81 8GB piano black and brushed titanium body is classy looking.

UNLIKE the N95, the N81 8GB features a more straightforward, one-way slide mechanism.

As its name suggests, this device comes with 8 gigabytes of internal flash memory.

This feature alone makes the N81 8GB special among the N-Series, making it comparable to a lot of dedicated portable music and media players. Although it has no memory card expansion, users will just have to be watchful of they store in the device.

But wait, this is not where this phone excels in. Talk about gaming and this phone is tops in this area.

Revive the N-Gage

The N81 8GB sort of revives the N-Gage platform (remember Nokia's N-Gage classic and QD models several years ago?), as it comes pre-loaded with three N-Gage gaming applications—Space Impact, Asphalt 3D, and Fifa '07.

Most notable of these is the mobile version of Fifa '07 soccer developed by the world's leading interactive entertainment software company, Electronic Arts.

The way it performs, expect more users to request Nokia to come up with similarly cool and exciting mobile games—as well as a joystick—in the near future.

Viewing screen

Well these games would be worthless if the N81 8GB doesn't have a descent viewing screen.

Luckily, the N81 8GB is blessed with a relatively large 2.4-inch screen (16.7 million colors and 240 x 320 pixels) that can be tilted horizontally so one could play games or watch video clips more comfortably.

Indeed, as a multimedia player, the N81 8GB provides a predictably excellent experience.

Audio could be heard either through the external speakers on both sides of the N81 8GB or, more preferably, through headphones plugged into the 3.5 mm headphone jack.

Music controls in front

Controls for the media player are located on the front of the phone, and it's possible to start playing music without even entering the menu.

But here's a caveat—these same controls could accidentally fire up the music while sending text messages as this writer found out.

Transferring tracks to the phone should now be easy since, apart from the 3G feature, one could also use the mobile phone's Wi-Fi to go to the Nokia "Ovi" web services platform, which offers an all new music download store at faster than 3G speeds and without incurring expensive mobile data charges.

Indeed, with its built-in Wi-Fi networking and massive internal storage, this writer strongly recommends the Nokia N81 8GB.

Yes, it doesn't come with the same wealth of functionality as the N95—no GPS and a lower quality camera—but with ample track storage capacity, it could be your low-cost alternative to the N95.

RP To Become More "Techie" In 5 Years

By Riza T. Olchondra

IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, INnovations will enable Filipinos to manage their life through phones, travel safely in cars with "reflexes," have "green" appliances, know the source and make-up of the food we eat, and consult with doctors who have "super senses" because of medical gadgets.

IBM said in its "Next Five In Five" report on innovations that this will be a global trend.

Former National Economic Development Authority director general Dr. Cayetano Paderanga, who now heads the Institute for Development and Econometric Analysis (IDEA) Inc., said the Philippines can play that game and is in fact leading in some of these trends.

5 Trends In 5 Years

• Your mobile phone will be your wallet, ticket buyer, bank, shopping buddy, and electronic ID.

• Applications in new vehicles will have sensors for avoiding collissions, choosing alternate routes, and making automatic adjustments to traffic lights.

• "Green" appliances could alert you via SMS if you left it open when you left home, provide updates on electrical usage, and generally help you be more environmentally friendly.

• Sensor-fitted food labels will let you know where your box of ready to cook rice meal came from, what are the substances in it, and the type of conditions it underwent during shipping.

• Doctors will have special gadgets to see through to your organs and hear the tiniest variation in your heartbeat. They will also be able to diagnose and explore treatment options using a 3D model of your body called an avatar.

RP potential

Paderanga said that such innovations as forecast by IBM will likely be ked by Asian countries such as Korea and Japan; and not by western countries such as the US. He noted that the Philippines is already a global player in mobile innovation with mobile remittances, banking, and other services.

The next potential is in medical technology that could boost the medical tourism and offshoring businesses, he said.

"If we just continue what we have been doing for the past few years, we can innovate even the areas that we are currently not strong in, such as smart cars and eco-friendly appliances. That is, encourage competition, let the private sector invest freely, let them and the government continue to invest in infrastructure, and grow the economy at five percent or more every year," he said.

Projecting images the Acer way

TIRED OF THE USUAL, SOMEtimes even boring, multimedia presentations?

The most logical solution to that would be to replace it.

But a simple replacement may not be enough. What you have to replace it with must be a product of quality.

Then again, it's not just quality that should count. The product has to come from a reliable company—one that offers true value for money.

Consider Acer's DLP projectors, like the X1160, P1165E, both with Native SVGA 800 x 600 resolution, and the P5260E with Native XGA 1024 x 768 resolution. All these are packed with some of the most innovative and practical features found in multimedia projectors in the market today.

Among its impressive features are the Acer ColorBoost technology, with optimized 6-segment color-wheel design and advanced lamp illumination technology for incredible color performance, the Acer SmartFormat technology that supports comprehensive "wide-format" signals, and the Empowering Key for easy access to features like eProjection Management, eView Management, eTimer and eOpening Management.

Other interesting stuff include Digital Connectivity-HDMI port for the P5260E that delivers uncompressed digital signals and provides easy connectivity to high-definition broadcasts, Digital Connectivity-DVI port for the P11653 and P5260E that supports digital high-definition signal and secure connectivity to various media sources, plus Instant Pack (no more waiting for the unit to cool down before unplugging), Auto Shutdown (for automatic safety shutdown when there's no signal) and Quick Start (15-second startup after pressing the power button).

But what really makes these products stand out is their lightweight structure—all Acer projector models weigh less than 3 kilograms.

If you're really on the lookout for the next freshly featured, power-packed, lightweight, color-rich, multimedia projector to own, why not try Acer projectors? They're fun to look at yet impressive enough to please your boss during office presentations, and perhaps help you bag that next interesting client. Or you may just sit back, relax, have a popcorn and watch a blockbuster movie together with your family or that special someone by your side? Nothing gets sweeter—and better—than that.

ITS lightweight structure makes Acer projectors stand out.

About Acer

Acer ranks as the world's No. 4 branded PC vendor, designing easy, dependable IT solutions that empower people to reach their goals and enhance their lives. Since spinning-off its manufacturing operation, Acer has focused on globally marketing its brand-name products: mobile and desktop PCs, servers and storage, LCD monitors and high-definition TVs, and handheld/navigational devices. Acer's unique Channel Business Model is instrumental to the company's continued success. The model encourages partners and suppliers to collaborate in a winning formula of supply-chain management, allowing Acer to provide customers with fresh technologies, competitive pricing, and quality service. Established in 1976, Acer Inc. employs 5,300 people supporting dealers and distributors in more than 100 countries. Estimated revenue for 2006 is US$11.31 billion. Please visit www.acer.com.

Top security concerns in '07; trends to watch out for in '08

THE COMPLEXITY AND EVERchanging threat landscape and the emergence of newer and more complex viruses—malware and hacking techniques developed by the criminal underworld—topped the concerns of businesses in 2007.

In addition, the proliferation of mobile computing and emergence of new computing devices—such as smart phones, thumb drives, and other peripheral devices—has increased the vulnerable access points of corporate networks for malicious activities.

2007 Internet security trends

High-profile data breaches which underscore the importance of data loss prevention technologies and strategies was one of the key trends observed by Symantec in 2007.

High profile victims of data breaches include financial industries, career recruitment, and retail.

Another Internet security trend observed for this year was the debut of Windows Vista. Attackers quickly found security holes in the operating system.

To date, Microsoft has released 16 security patches that impacted on the new operating system.

As expected, spam continued to be a major concern in 2007, with image spam declining and PDF spam seen emerging as a new source of annoyance. A new attack called Greeting-card spam was also seen responsible for delivering the Storm Worm malware (also known as Peacomm).

Professional Attack Kits, particularly the MPack and phishing tool kits made a big splash in 2007.

Attackers are becoming increasingly sophisticated and organized, and have begun to adopt methods that are similar to traditional software development and business practices. Of the phishing web sites observed in the first half of the year, 42 percent were associated with phishing toolkits.

Phishing too, continued to be big in 2007, with an 8 percent increase in unique phishing sites during the first half of the year.

Symantec listed phishing toolkits as a major contributor to the growing problem of Internet security attacks in 2007.

Another menacing trend seen this year were attackers who now prefer to just lie and wait for victims to come to them by exploiting trusted Web sites.

Attackers no longer actively seek out their intended victims, they are now compromising trusted sites. When a user visits a trusted site, the attacker may have their way with the victim's computer.

Joining the 2007 top 10 Internet trend list are bots and botnets, which continued to silently slip into unsecured computers and perpetrate a wide variety of malicious activity.

Bots knocked Estonia off the online map. The Storm Worm malware employed bot technology as well.

Web plug-in vulnerabilities and exploits continued to plague IT staff members during 2007. ActiveX controls that comprised majority of plug-in vulnerabilities, posed various security threats that may compromise the availability, confidentiality, and integrity of a vulnerable computer.

Another trend observed in 2007 was Vulnerabilities for Sale—a system's vulnerabilities would be sold to the highest bidder.

Finally, Virtual Machine Security Implications made headlines in 2007 with major players going public even though the security implications of virtual technology have not yet been fully understood.

Security trends to watch in 2008

Symantec warns that the year 2008 will bring about threats that include dissemination of misinformation, fraud, phishing, and invasion of privacy.

Bots will continue to diversify and evolve in their behavior in 2008. Consumers can also expect to see things like phishing sites hosted by bot zombies, among other forms of attack.

Symantec also expects that the number of new advanced web threats will rise as web services grow and browsers continue to converge on a uniform interpretation standard for scripting languages, such as JavaScript.

As the interest in mobile security is rising, attackers are also likely to take advantage of mobile platforms as phones become more complex, more interesting and more connected.

Symantec also expects to see spam evolving in order to evade traditional blocking systems and trick users into reading messages.

Consumers can expect to see new types of attachments that contain malicious codes. Spammers will also continue to focus on making content more appealing to readers, capitalizing on highly visible current events.

Game enthusiasts are also at greater risk in 2008 as criminals, phishers, spammers, and others turn their attention to Virtual Worlds, while massive multiplayer online games (MMOGs) expand.

Global leader

Symantec is a global leader in infrastructure software, enabling businesses and consumers to have confidence in a connected world.

The company helps customers protect their infrastructure, information, and interactions by delivering software and services that address risks to security, availability, compliance and performance.

Based in Cupertino, California, Symantec has operations in more than 40 countries.

More information is available at www.symantec.com.

BCDA eyes development of 'second Global City'

Land ownership dispute seen as a stumbling block

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BASES CONVERSION Development Authority (BCDA) said it was preparing to establish a "second Bonifacio Global City" as it awaited a court decision on the ownership of a 25.8-hectare property that would form part of the development.

BCDA vice president Aileen Zosa said in an interview that the planned development would border the southern side of Forbes Park and Dasmariñas Village.

The project will, however, be less than half the original Global City, which covers an area of more than 200 hectares.

"The new Global City would cover about 94.4 hectares, including the 35.5-ha Jusmag area and the 33.1-ha Ascom/BNS/Marines headquarters area," Zosa said.

"These two pieces of property are ready for disposal but the BCDA is keen on waiting for the resolution of the ownership dispute between the agency and Novai (or Navy Officer Village Association Inc.) over the 25.8-ha property," she added.

Such consideration was made following a favorable decision of the Supreme Court in 2006, which recognized the BCDA's ownership of the Jusmag area that a group of Armed Forces and police officers—the Southside Homeowners Association Inc. or Shai—claimed was owned by its members.

Asked whether a lengthy waiting time for the Supreme court decision on Novai could compromise the option to create the second Global City, Zosa said the BCDA was "not in a hurry" to dispose of the three pieces of property.

Still, the BCDA has not even taken possession of the Jusmag property and the agency has filed with the Pasig City Regional Trial Court an urgent manifestation and motion for the issuance of a writ of execution of the SC ruling.

"We hope to secure the Jusmag titles within 2008," Zosa said.

BCDA data show that the Jusmag/Shai property was valued at P50,000 a square meter and could earn at least P1.5 billion in upfront cash.

As for the Novai and Ascom/BNS/Marines HQ, which are adjacent to each other, the land covered was valued at P60,000 per sq.m.

Since starting the conversion into productive civilian use of former military land and facilities across Luzon in the 1990s, the BCDA has posted P38.2 billion in earnings as of October 2007.

Of the amount, 80 percent of P30.36 billion came Fort Bonifacio; 12 percent or P4.7 billion from leases and joint ventures; 5 percent or P1.9 billion from outright sale, and 3 percent or P1.24 billion from securitization.

Saudi Prince's $153-M hotel project gets perks

THE BOARD OF INVESTMENTS has approved the grant of incentives to a $153-million hotel complex project of Saudi Arabia's Prince Alwaleed, the world's 13th richest person according to Forbes.com.

According to BOI data, the project cost of about P7.65 billion—which excludes the cost of land—covers P1.75 billion in hotel operation and the construction of the hotel, amounting to $226,562 per room.

KHI Manila Property Inc., a joint venture between Alwaleed's Kingdom Hotel Investments and Ayala Land Inc., will build the tourism facilities at the corner of Makati Avenue and Arnaiz Road.

On that 7,377-square-meter property will rise a 300-room Fairmont Hotel, 30-suite Raffles Hotel and 189 Raffles-branded serviced residences.

The luxury hotel complex is aimed at international tourists who need five-star accommodations as well as those staying for longer than two weeks and in need of serviced apartments.

The apartments would also cater to businessmen and executives who are on assignment in the country for a month to a year, and to *balikbayan* families and local tourists on holiday.

The BOI said the project was in line with the Medium Term Development Plan for Tourism and was qualified to fiscal and non-fiscal incentives under the Investments Priorities Plan.

"This project aims to break a new ground toward the introduction and broadening of (the serviced apartment approach) in the tourist accommodation business in the Philippines," the agency said.

The project is expected to create jobs for 1,728 people in the construction stage and 1,119 in commercial operation, which will start in January 2011.

The BOI's announcement came after Alwaleed's visit to the country in August with a team of 40 executives to formalize the joint venture with ALI and explore other possible investments here.

According to Forbes.com's 2007 list of the world's billionaires, the "self-made" Alwaleed—a nephew of King Abdullah—is worth $20.3 billion.

Last August, ALI president Jaime I. Ayala said the project marked the start of Ayala Center's makeover into a world-class business destination considering that Fairmont and Raffles represent two of the world's biggest luxury hotel brands.

NFA sees stable supply, prices of rice

By Amy R. Remo

THE NATIONAL FOOD AUthority ends the year assuring consumers of stable supply and prices of quality rice and better income for farmers despite its estimated loss of P4.5 billion.

"The NFA is mandated to stabilize the prices of basic commodities during emergencies and must ensure that rice will be available at all times and at affordable price under whatever circumstances," said NFA Administrator Jessup P. Navarro.

Navarro noted increases in this year's monthly rice distribution, showing consumers' preference for government rice.

"As of mid-December, NFA had distributed 35.5 million 50-kilo bags, about four million bags higher than our target of 31.5 million bags," Navarro said.

Priced at P18.25 a kilo, the NFA rice is distributed through 3,709 Bigasan ni Gloria sa Palengke stores, 7,918 Tindahan Natin rice outlets, 197 Tindahan ni Gloria rolling stores and 20,233 accredited rice retailers.

Navarro explained that the Tindahan Natin outlets were specifically established in depressed communities to sell NFA rice, along with other basic commodities, at affordable prices.

As of mid-December, cumulative rice sales at Tindahan Natin outlets had reached 3.8 million bags, worth some P3.1 billion.

Meanwhile, Navarro said the NFA had consistently been able to ensure food security and stability of rice supplies and prices in areas affected by calamities.

For this year, the agency issued a total of 133,645 bags of rice to various relief agencies and local governments in regions affected by strong typhoons Chedeng, Dodong, Hannah, Kabayan, Lando and Mina.

On top of ensuring rice supply and prices, the NFA extends its support to the government's nutrition campaign by distributing iron-fortified rice to pre-school and Grade 1 students.

This year, the NFA delivered 2.5 million bags of rice to 9,730 public elementary schools nationwide, benefiting 2.63 million school children.

For its stakeholders, Navarro said the NFA was able to provide farmers with higher profits, following the national government's directive to increase support price from P10 to P11 a kilo for clean and dry palay.

The increase took effect in October this year.

Individual farmers who sold their produce to the agency got an additional P0.25 a kilo as incentive, while farmers' cooperatives were granted another P0.25 a kilo as Cooperative Development Incentive Fund.

On top of these incentives, the NFA is giving farmers and cooperatives an additional P0.50 for every kilo of palay sold to the agency, known as the La Niña incentive, starting last month until March next year.

FILIPINO rice farmers are assured by the NFA of better prices for their produce. The agency has increased its buying price to P11 per kilo from P10 for clean and dry palay. On top of this, farmers get extra incentive from the NFA amounting to P0.25 to P1 per kilo. The NFA, in line with its mandate to ensure the stability of rice supply and prices, buys palay from farmers during harvest seasons to build its inventory and taps into the buffer to sell rice to the public during lean months. AP FILE PHOTO

E.Visayas palay output posts record growth

TACLOBAN CITY—EASTERN Visayas recorded the highest growth rate of 14.1 percent in palay production among the country's regions this year, the Department of Agriculture said.

"We even outperformed ourselves. We were able to exceed our own target," said Leo Cañeda, DA regional executive director. The agency has set a growth rate of 7.5 percent.

According to the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, palay production in the region during the dry season (November 2006 to April 2007) was 508,000 metric tons. During the wet season (May to October 2007), it reached 440,000 MT.

The total palay production was 14.1 percent higher than the 831,000 MT posted in 2006.

Arsenio Fortin, DA regional technical director for LGU (local government unit) support, extension and infrastructure, attributed the rise in production to favorable weather and LGU support for the rice program.

Agriculture officials here are optimistic that palay production at yearend would even be higher than the BAS forecast.

Among the provinces in the region, Leyte accounted for the biggest share in production at 58 percent. Southern Leyte and Samar contributed 9 percent each; Biliran and Northern Samar, 8 percent each, and Eastern Samar, 5 percent.

Eastern Visayas is now 113-percent rice sufficient, said Rufino Ayaso III, regional coordinator of the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani rice program.

For next year, the target rice production in the region is one million MT, Ayaso said. *Vicente S. Labro, Inquirer Visayas*

Fuji Xerox expects 100% business growth in RP

By Riza T. Olchondra

FUJI XEROX PRINTERS, THE SECOND largest printer manufacturer in the Philippines, said it would more than double its 2006 sales by the time its 2007 fiscal year ends in March.

James Henderson, managing director of Fuji Xerox Printers for Asia-Pacific, said the company sold only 1,000 printers when it entered the Philippine market in 2004. This, he said grew to 1,600 units in 2005 and 4,000 units in 2006.

The target for 2007 is 10,000 units.

Henderson also expressed optimism that the company's market share would increase by a few percentage points due to a wide range of products being introduced to the market.

"We used to focus just on the enterprise market, but now we are bringing high-end technology to the consumer market at competitive cost," Henderson said. "We are new in this segment and have much room to grow, so we are optimistic."

Fuji Xerox Printers currently has a 20-percent share of the printer market in the Philippines—a far second to HP's 60 percent.

Henderson said the company would slowly close the gap in market share by offering more choices that fit the needs of customers.

Last Christmas, Fuji Xerox Printers launched the DocuPrint C1110, a high quality color printer in a small package.

Marketing manager for Asia Pacific and China Vincent Sim said the printer was launched to meet the growing demand of households and small businesses for quality color printouts at an affordable price and easy-to-use package.

PNOC group projects P4-B profit in 2007

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL CO. expects its consolidated net income to breach the P4-billion mark this year, with the bulk to come from its petroleum exploration arm.

PNOC president Antonio Cailao said in a briefing that the government firm's group profit had already reached more than P3 billion as of end-September, on revenues of close to P5.2 billion.

Contributing the bulk of the earnings during the first nine months was PNOC Exploration Corp., registering gross revenues of P4.9 billion and a net income of almost P1.5 billion.

PNOC itself posted gross revenues of only P643 million, but saw net income hit P1.3 billion due to contributions from its subsidiaries.

Proceeds from the sale of PNOC's remaining 60-percent stake in PNOC Energy Development Corp. last month was also expected to boost PNOC's 2007 revenues, Cailao said.

Of the P58.5-billion sale price, P11 billion went to PNOC, while the rest went to national government coffers.

Also expected to contribute to PNOC's projected P4-billion net income for the year are PNOC Development and Management Corp. (PDMC) and PNOC Shipping and Transport Corp. (PSTC), which registered a profit of P337 million and P14 million, respectively, in the first three quarters.

PDMC president and chief executive Wilfredo Bacareza earlier said the company—which is PNOC's real estate arm—should post a profit of P410.7 million this year, a drastic increase from last year's P14.3 million.

The expected profit surge could be attributed to the company's aggressive collection efforts, drastic cost cutting and sale of assets.

PNOC Alternative Fuels Corp., however, had yet to contribute to PNOC's consolidated bottom line.

In the January-September period, PNOC-AFC registered gross revenues of P21 million and a net loss of P56 million.

But for PNOC, in general, Cailao said the future looked rosy.

"We'll definitely have a higher income this year than last," he said.

A deal maker with a hot hand opens his wallet

BUFFETT

WARREN E. BUFFETT IS IN NO mood to quit.

At 77, Buffett, the country's most famous investor, is in the midst of his hottest streak in almost a decade. And he is capping his run with a flurry of deal-making.

On Friday, Buffett stunned Wall Street by announcing that he would enter the troubled bond insurance business. He also spent about $440 million for a unit of ING Groep, the Dutch financial giant.

Three days earlier, on Christmas, he agreed to buy a $4.5-billion stake in the industrial conglomerate owned by the Pritzker family. And a few weeks before that, he waded into the junk bond market, buying $2.1 billion of debt issued by TXU Corp., the electric utility.

As the fortunes of big Wall Street firms sink, Berkshire Hathaway, the holding firm that Buffett runs out of Omaha, Neb. is on a tear. Its Class A shares have jumped 27 percent this year, their best showing since 1998, when they soared 52 percent. The Standard & Poor's 500-stock index, by comparison, has gained a mere 4.24 percent this year.

In a telephone interview on Friday, Buffett said the timing of his recent investments was a coincidence. Since the credit crisis erupted this summer, he has repeatedly tried to blunt speculation that he might ride to the rescue of an ailing bank or Wall Street firm.

"We had no compulsion at the start of the year to do anything," Buffett said. "On the other hand, there was no limit to what we could do."

Thousands of investors on and off Wall Street study what Buffett does. It's no wonder: Over the past four decades he has built Berkshire Hathaway into a $216-billion company with businesses ranging from insurance and corporate jets to ice cream and underwear. During that time, his company's book value has soared by more than 360,000 percent.

Amid the turmoil in the financial markets this year, Buffett quietly tinkered with his company's vast stock portfolio, which totaled $78 billion as of Sept. 30.

He has increased his stakes in two major banks, US Bancorp and Wells Fargo, and cast new bets on Burlington Northern, the country's second-largest railroad, and CarMax, the biggest used-car dealership.

With about $47 billion in cash on hand, Berkshire still has plenty of money for acquisitions. *New York Times News Service*

Top RP illnesses, what needs to be done

RESPIRATORY ILLNESSES LEAD the list of 10 leading illnesses in the Philippines, according to the official 2005 Field Health Services and Information System report of the Department of Health.

Of these, Acute Lower Respiratory Tract Infection (Alri) and pneumonia top the list with 690,566 reported cases, Bronchitis/Bronchiolitis came second with 616,041 reported cases and TB Respiratory came in sixth with 114,360 reported cases.

The report also lists (in descending order) acute diarrhea, influenza, hypertension, TB respiratory, heart diseases, malaria, chicken pox, and dengue fever as the top 10 diseases plaguing the country.

While the research for 2006 figures is underway, the rise in the number of reported cases calls for serious action. Comparing the study done in 2004 with 2005, a consistency between the two years in terms of figures and illnesses is revealed. It is therefore safe to assume that while figures could either drop or rise, it is likely that the same diseases might top the list for 2006.

What can be done and who can help?

The best way to help curb the prevalence of such diseases is still for people to undergo regular medical check-ups.

In fact, the government has done its effort to educate people about these common illnesses. There is already a wealth of education campaigns about the listed diseases. But the persistence and increase in the number of cases should encourage continuous efforts not only from the government but also business enterprises. While the government continues to encourage visits to the local health centers, it seems that not all people are able to respond to the call in time. And when they do so, it is sometimes already too late.

The first ones who should take action are the individuals themselves who should take note of the preventive or cautionary measures against such diseases. They should first learn to make a simple self-assessment.

Self-assessment tips

Here are helpful ways to do so:

• In order to avoid respiratory health problems, they should assess their lifestyle. They should ask themselves questions like: Do they smoke? Do they eat healthy? Is the air in the place they live in healthy?

• Quitting smoking or gradually lessening the habit is one good way to reduce the risk of respiratory illnesses. Since it's almost impractical to leave a certain place of residence despite the prevalence of pollution, one can probably lessen trips of passing through heavily polluted areas. Growing trees has been known to lessen the effects of pollution since trees absorb carbon dioxide and give out oxygen.

• People should also be more meticulous about what they choose to eat and drink. Eating in unsanitary places increases the risk of catching disease.

• Consuming less alcohol, eating healthy, cholesterol-free food and living a stress-free lifestyle should help prevent hypertension. People should be wary though that in some cases, hypertensive patients sometimes do not show any symptoms, which is why it is called the "silent killer". Keeping this in mind, they should be able to assess their lifestyle and go to the doctors regularly for advice.

• Keeping their surroundings clean conducive to health. Nearly all cases of dengue arise from stagnant water.

• "Better safe than sorry", although a cliché, is the theme of ACE Insurance Philippines' corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative that aims to increase awareness about healthy living. This CSR program is part of the company's 60th anniversary celebration to give back to the community the support it has received over the past six decades.

ACE Insurance Philippines has gone on several mall and MRT tours already over the past couple of months. In each case, it has attempted to draw people's attention to diseases by mounting simple medical assistance booths in the malls. At the MRT stations, health tips pamphlets are distributed. The objective is always the same: To help raise serious interest among Filipinos from all walks of life about their health. To do this, ACE Insurance tapped its pool of medical professionals to conduct check-ups especially for the mall-goers. The scheme includes blood pressure check and a simple question and answer session with the attending physician.

If the doctors find cause for the patient to visit another doctor for a more thorough check-up, then they have played a valuable role in helping some individuals to focus on their health.

SANOFI-AVENTIS DONATES TO CEBU'S 'LITTLE LAMBS'

In answering the call for good corporate citizenship, Sanofi-aventis, through its employee-volunteer group Blue Hands, recently turned over cash and material donations to the Little Lamb Center in Cebu City. Run by the Missionaries of the Poor, the Little Lamb Center is home for physically and mentally handicapped children. It is the first and only permanent resident facility in Cebu for poor kids with multiple disorders such as cerebral palsy, autism and Down syndrome. The Blue Hands volunteer group of Sanofi-aventis serves as the service arm for the company's numerous corporate social responsibility projects. Sanofi-aventis is a leading global pharmaceutical company which discovers, develops and distributes therapeutic solutions to improve the lives of people. Shown is Bro. Augusto Silot Jr (3rd from right) receiving a check donation from Blue Hands volunteers (from left) John Requinton, Blue Hands team leader in Cebu; Michael Alonte, Sanofi-aventis professional service representative from Cebu; Sanofi-aventis HR director Len Villa, Winthrop director Mito Raagas, and Sanofi-aventis communications manager Cheryl Ann Serrano.

Godiva opens Robinsons Midtown branch

BEAUTY AND WELLNESS CENTER GODIVA Skin Station recently unveiled its latest addition to its fast-growing chain of Skin Station branches with an exclusive autograph signing and ribbon cutting by actress and Godiva endorser Chin Chin Gutierrez. Situated at the 4th level of Robinsons Midtown, the newest and upscale wing of Robinsons Place Manila, the new Godiva Skin Station is now the sixth branch. A few more are expected to open within the year.

"The opening of this new branch certainly marks yet another milestone for us", said Fred Reyes, president and owner of Godiva Inc. "Godiva is certainly expanding its business. With upcoming branches and new product lines coming in the pipeline, our customers can be assured that we will continue to provide them with only the best products and services to suit their skin care needs", added Reyes.

Offering a wide range of facial and body treatments, the new Godiva Skin Station in Robinsons Midtown addresses beauty concerns with the broadest and most advanced range of skin care services. With its convenient and comfortable setting, coupled with excellent customer service, one is sure to enjoy an utmost skin pampering experience.

MULTI-AWARDED actress and Godiva endorser Chin Chin Gutierrez signs autographs for her fans during the grand opening of the new Godiva Skin Station branch in Robinsons Midtown Nov. 27.

Godiva Skin Station offers skin whitening, rejuvenating, anti-blemish and firming treatments done by professional therapists. Medical consultants are also available for free consultation.

Other Godiva Skin Station branches include SM Fairview, Makati Bel-air, Alabang, Binondo, Greenhills and soon to open in Quezon Avenue and Timog Avenue.

For more information, call 751-6140 (Makati Bel-air), 939-1105 (SM Fairview), 842-8484 (Alabang), 244-8714 (Binondo), 722-9123 (Greenhills), and 567-1968 (Robinsons Midtown), or e-mail skinstation@i-godiva.com.

Petron 'Xtend Biyaheng Bigtime' offers Toyota Avanza grand prize

TWO BRAND-NEW TOYOTA AVANZAS with LPG conversion kit are at stake in the grand raffle draw of the Petron "Xtend Biyaheng Bigtime" promo, which is ongoing until Feb. 15.

Every single-receipt purchase worth P300 of Petron Xtend entitles the buyer to one raffle coupon, which may be dropped at selected Petron Xtend stations nationwide. Four monthly raffle draws will be held to choose the winners for the following prizes: two Nokia 6131 cell phones, 10 Jollibee gift certificates worth P1,000 each; and three Petron Xtend fuel vouchers worth P5,000 each.

At stake during the grand raffle draw are five Magic Sing microphones, five Petron Xtend fuel vouchers worth P10,000 each, and two brand-new Toyota Avanza units with LPG conversion kit.

The deadlines for submission of raffle coupons for the 3rd and 4th/grand draw are Jan. 15 (for the Jan 28 3rd draw) and Feb 15 for the Feb 28 4th and grand draw.

Winners will be notified via registered mail, and should claim their prizes within 60 days. Petron Xtend is available at the following stations nationwide: Quezon City-Mindanao Avenue, Commonwealth Avenue, G. Araneta Avenue, Tandang Sora Avenue; Makati City-Gil Puyat Avenue; Pasong Tamo corner Malugay; Pasay City-MIA Road, FB Harrison; C5-Pasig City; Marcos Hi-way; Wack-Wack, Mandaluyong; AH Lacson, Manila; Pamplona, Las Pinas; Dr. A. Santos Avenue, Paranaque City; Cebu stations-Basak, Mandaue City; Pusok, Lapu-Lapu City; corner Archbishop Reyes/De la Montana, Cebu City; and Bajada, Davao City.

Allied independent auto gas stations served by Petron include: Echo Gas, E. Rodriguez Avenue, Cubao, Quezon City; JP Auto Gas, Marcos Hi-way, Baguio City; Macro Auto LPG, Mindanao Avenue Extension, Quezon City; and Macro Auto LPG, MacArthur Highway, Karuhatan, Valenzuela.

Petron Xtend is the brand name of the oil industry leader's liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) for use in automobiles. Last year, Petron invested an additional P55 million for its Autogas-LPG program in support of the environmental policies of the government for cleaner fuels and to help meet the expanding demand for LPG among motorists.

For the increasing number of LPG-powered vehicles on the road today, Petron Xtend has a proven track record of safety and reliability. Motorists are advised to look for Petron stations with the prominent signs of Petron Xtend Autogas for their LPG-powered vehicles.

UP to confer Doctor of Science, honoris causa, on Nobel Laureate

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES IS set to confer the degree of Doctor of Science, honoris causa, upon Prof. David J. Gross, recipient of the 2004 Nobel Prize in Physics, on Jan. 9, 10 a.m., at the UP Film Institute. Following the conferment, Gross will deliver a lecture on the future of fundamental physics. The lecture is part of the Asean-wide "Bridges—Dialogues Towards a Culture of Peace" program of the International Peace Foundation. UP is co-hosting the event as part of its Centennial Lecture Series. Along with Dr. Hugh David Politzer and Dr. Frank Wilczek, Gross received the Nobel Prize for discovering asymptotic freedom in the theory of strong interaction-one of the four fundamental forces of nature. Their discovery led to the establishment of quantum chromodynamics as the accurate theory of strong nuclear force. Gross is the current director of the Kavli Institute of Theoretical Physics at the University of California, Santa Barbara and also holds the Frederic W. Gluck Chair in Theoretical Physics at the same university. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree at the Hebrew University, where he majored in physics and mathematics. He then took his graduate studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Gross has also been the recipient of awards such as the Grande Medaille D'Or from the Academie des Sciences; the European Physical Society Prize in Elementary Particle Physics; the Harvey Prize from Technion-Israel Institute of Technology; and the Oskar Klein Medal from Stockholm University, among others.

More PEP next page

*"What You give, You do not take away ...
And death is only a horizon
And a horizon is nothing
save the limit of our sight."*

In Loving Memory of

MA. LUISA ALBERT ATIENZA

December 13, 1946 – January 1, 1996

On her Twelfth Death Anniversary

Jacky and his wife, **Cecille**; children **Marti, Charly** and grandson **Nicky** request relatives and friends to remember her in their prayers and to join them at the celebration of the Holy Mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Chapel, Camp Gen. Rigoberto J. Atienza, Libis, Quezon City at 4:00 pm on Tuesday, January 1, 2008.

The Holy Mass will also be offered at the following churches:

Sanctuario De San Jose	6:15 PM
Sacred Heart Parish Church	6:30 PM
Christ the King Parish	6:30 PM
Mary the Queen Parish	7:15 PM
St. John Bosco Parish	7:00 PM
Santa Maria della Strada Church	12:00 NN
Assumption Convent	8:00 AM
Our Lady of Montserrat Church	8:30 AM

BUY • SELL • PAWN
ROLEX
SWISS WATCHES, L.V. BAGS
JEWELRY
DIAMONDS
BEST PRICE
SPOT CASH
382-9198
834-1572
0917-8141967

JAC FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP, INC., 100 C. Palanca St., Quiapo, Manila will sell all unredeemed pledges for the months of JUNE 2007 & JULY 2007 on JAN. 21, 2008 at 9:00 am.
J. Lanuza – *Auctioneer*
(PDI–Dec. 31, 2007)

FCMC 13927/2007
IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE
HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION
MATRIMONIAL CAUSES NO. 13927 OF 2007
BETWEEN
WONG CHICK HUNG Petitioner
and
AURONA G. REVILLA Respondent
NOTICE
A Petition for Divorce has been filed by the Petitioner against the Undermentioned -
AURONA G. REVILLA of unknown address who may apply to Family Court Registry, M2/F., Wanchai Law Court, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Hong Kong for a copy of the Petition. If within one month she has not communicated with the Registry, the Court may hear the case in her absence.
Registrar
This Notice to be advertised once in Philippines, an English newspaper published and circulating in Philippines.
(PDI – December 31, 2007)

JOB Market
Where you find the best.

BUYING
ROLEX • Patek Philippe • AP
Panerai • IWC • Omega • Cartier
Also Diamonds and unusual watches
09178884040
7269687
email: worldwatchs@gmail.com

International Company Needs
MD80 LICENSED ENGINEER
To work in Clarkfield Pampanga
For interview & orientation
Call: 0916-5152195 or send
curriculum vitae to:
kukovazquez@yahoo.com.ar

PAWN • BUY • SELL
ROLEX, AP PANERAI, OMEGA
CARTIER, IWC PATEK, BULGARI
SWISS WATCHES
GOLD & DIAMOND SPECIALISTS
sec ndo Glorietta
894-0282 • 889-7956

RYKEROLL
RENT-A-VAN
07 URVAN
ESCAPADE
10 HOURS P1,800
WITH DRIVER
7878776 / 7964377
09213497170

People, Events & Products

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Aries Espinosa

Petron celebrates Christmas with 6,000 children

CELEBRATING THE SEASON OF hope, industry leader Petron Corp recently held its annual gift-giving event Project Joy with 6,000 children. Now on its 10th year, Project Joy has become a tradition for Petron and its business partners to share the fun and excitement of the season, especially with children from underserved communities in Metro Manila.

SONG and dance rendered by scholars of Petron's Tulong Aral.

This year's Project Joy was attended by DSWD Secretary Esperanza Cabral, DSWD Undersecretary Luwalhati Pablo, DepEd NCR Director Dr. Teresita Domalanta, SM Supermalls president Annie Garcia, Public in Ministry Director of World Vision Development Foundation and basketball icon Alvin Patrimonio, among others. The activity was held at the sprawling San Miguel by the Bay in Mall of Asia.

It counted the 5,000 scholars of Petron's Tulong Aral program and 1,000 children from DSWD shelter homes and sons and daughters of jeepney drivers as its beneficiaries. More than 500 employee volunteers from Petron's different divisions served as elder brothers and sisters to the children and made sure they enjoyed a memorable treat during this half day event. They were joined by DSWD social workers and officials, and teachers from the Tulong Aral partner schools. The globally acclaimed UP Singing Ambassadors also volunteered their time and talent to sing for the participants of the program.

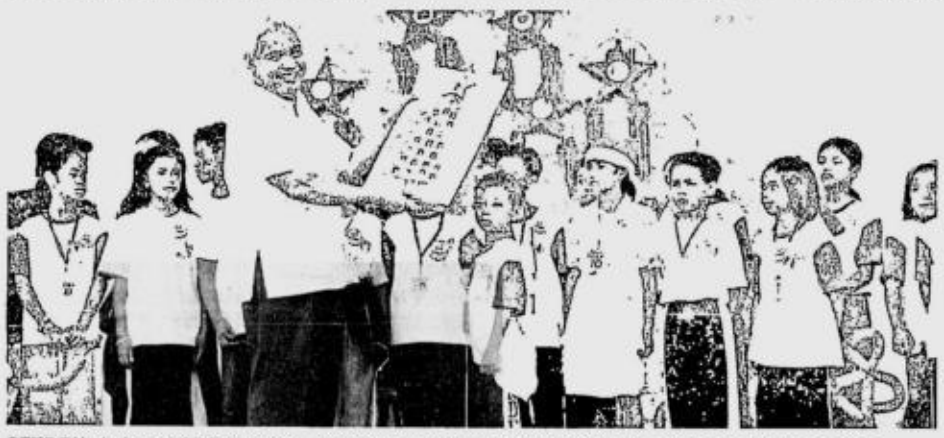
Project Joy is part of Petron's long-term commitment to Fuel HOPE, or Helping Filipino children and the youth Overcome Poverty through Education. The essence of this program is to bring underprivileged children to school, keep them there, keep them well, and make sure they learn.

Started in 2002, Tulong Aral has not only continuously increased the number of its beneficiaries, but has helped the students perform better in school. At the end of school year 2006-2007, Petron had 380 outstanding students of Tulong Aral, 54 of whom were first honors. More importantly, the first batch of 1,000 Tulong Aral scholars is expected to graduate grade school in March 2008.

In addition to its educational assistance program, the company has been constructing Petron Schools all over the country to ensure that children have a venue for learning. To date, Petron has completed building 21 schools, mostly in Mindanao, where the need is greatest.

In his welcome remarks during Project Joy, Petron Corp chair and CEO Nicasio I. Alcantara reaffirmed Petron's commitment to corporate social responsibility: "Christmas is the season of hope, the season of thanksgiving, and the season of unity. Project Joy grew and Tulong Aral happened because we worked together to secure a better tomorrow for our children. Let us continue to work as one to give our children a future they so deserve."

Petron was joined by its partners namely SM, World Vision, McDonalds Charities, Sa Aklat Sisikat Foundation, and PPRTH.



PETRON chair and CEO Nicasio I. Alcantara reads one of the Christmas cards made by one of the 6,000 schoolchildren joining the company's Project Joy.

SUN LIFE FINANCIAL BAGS IABC QUILL ONCE MORE

For the second year in a row, Sun Life Financial Philippines bagged an IABC Philippines' Quill, this time for LUV VUL's video presentation aptly dubbed 'Luv Who.' Sun Life is the only insurance company to have made it to the much-coveted winner's circle. LUV VUL's official video garnered a merit award under Communications Skills Division-AV category. Shown is Sun Life Financial senior vice president for marketing Raoul Littaua flanked by marketing officer Mylene Daez-Lopa and creative and interactive communications manager Don Aaron Peji as they accept the Philippine Quill Award on behalf of Sun Life from IABC board of directors N. Jeric Sevilla and Carmencita Arce.

BCDA awards O&M contract to Lopez-led group

THE BASES CONVERSION AND DEVELopment Authority (BCDA) has awarded the contract for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEx) to a joint venture group of three companies led by the Lopez Group.

BCDA president and CEO Narciso L. Abaya said the joint venture group is composed of the Lopez-owned First Philippine Holdings Corp (FPHC), Tollways Management Corp (TMC), and Lopez partner Egis Road Operation.

The terms of contract for operation and maintenance will be for six months, renewable for another six months.

The services include functional requirements for the efficient operation of the toll road, such as toll road collection, traffic safety and security management, toll road maintenance, including greenery and landscaping, management services, and all necessary support services.

BCDA president and CEO Narciso L. Abaya signed the contract with First Philippine Holdings Corp president Elpidio Ibanez, Tollways Management Corp president Anthony Mabasa, and Egis Road Operation operations manager Marc Obrowski.

It will be recalled that in September 2007, BCDA invited four short-listed companies to submit proposals in connection with BCDA's need for an interim service provider to operate the SCTEx.

The bidders were FPHC-TMC-Egis joint venture, Metro Pacific Investments Corp (MPIC), Africa Israel Investment (Philippines) Inc, and Derech Eretz Highway Management Joint Venture; UEM-Mara Philippines Corp (UMPC)/PEA Tollways Corp (PEATC); and Philippine National Construction Company.

Only the joint venture of FPHC, TMC and Egis Road submitted eligibility documents and financial proposals which were subsequently declared Single Calculated Responsive Bid.

Operations and maintenance is the final phase in the implementation of the SCTEx project.

The SCTEx, which is 93.77 km long, is composed of two segments: the 50.5-km Subic-Clark segment (Package 1), and the 43.27-km Clark-Tarlac segment (Package 2).

Touted as the country's longest expressway, the SCTEx is targeted for commercial operations in March 2008.

VILLALON NAMED MEDICAL ONCOLOGY PIONEER IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Professor Antonio H. Villalon, one of the country's top medical oncologists, was recently named one of the 'Pioneers of Medical Oncology in Southeast Asia' during the First Southeast Asia Medical Oncology Forum (1st Seamof) held in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) in Jakarta, Indonesia in November. Villalon shared the recognition with fellow professors Dr. Harryanto Reksodiputro of Indonesia, Sumitra Thongprasert of Thailand, and Tan Yew Oo of Singapore. All four doctors were recognized for pioneering the development and advancement of medical oncology in their respective countries. Villalon established the first local fellowship training program for medical oncologists that produced the first locally trained Internist-Oncology nationwide. The Philippines currently has over 120 medical oncologists. Shown during the recognition ceremonies were (from left): Reksodiputro, Thongprasert, Dr. Rahmi Untoro, MPH (representative of the Ministry of Health of Indonesia), Villalon, and Tan Yew Oo (Singapore).

Forum on Parkinson's disease and the elderly

THE PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP OF the Philippines (PSGP) Foundation will be holding a meeting on Jan. 6 at 12:30 p.m. at the 14th floor auditorium of the Cathedral Heights Building Complex (CHBC) South Tower of St. Luke's Medical Center. The meeting is free and open to the public, and is being sponsored by Servier Philippines and St. Luke's.

PSGP is a registered non-profit organization that was founded in 1999, and aims to provide support to families and patients with Parkinson's disease, parkinsonism, tremor, dystonia, and other movement disorders. Its founding chair was the late former Vice President Emmanuel Pelaez.

For the current meeting, the speaker will be one of the country's top orthopedic surgeons, Dr. Cesar Dimayuga. Trained in the United States, Dimayuga will be discussing common orthopedic issues that plague the elderly and patients with Parkinson's disease or parkinsonism, including osteoporosis, arthritis, fractures from falls and frozen shoulder. The lecture will be followed by an open forum.

For more information, call PSGP at 631-1531 or the Movement Disorders Center of St. Luke's at 727-5552.

Philippine tourism efforts lauded in China

THE COUNTRY IS MAKING HEADWAY IN earning the interest of the Chinese travel market, with the Philippine pavilion being recognized in the recent China International Travel Mart (CITM) held in Kunming, China.

Applauded for having the "best participation", the Department of Tourism and the private sector's outstanding promotional efforts included an inviting and colorful booth design, comprehensive marketing materials, the synergy and enthusiasm of the government and private travel sectors, the highly applauded performances of the Bayanihan National Folk Dance Company, and samplings of local beverages.

"The quality of the attendance we received at the fair speaks much of the excitement of the Chinese travel market over our destinations and attractions. We anticipate a surge of arrivals from this part of China as a result of the successful endeavor," said Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano.

China is currently the fourth leading source of tourists and one of the fastest growing markets. A total of 127,954 Chinese came to the Philippines January to October 2007, reflecting a 15.8-percent growth rate over the same period last year.

The tourism chief is confident that the country's participation in the CITM will help set a strong momentum for increasing arrivals in the coming year.

"The CITM is one of the major travel trade events in one of our top source countries. This award reflects the high level of collaboration between the public and the private sector. It serves to further encourage our industry stakeholders, who put their best foot forward in occasions such as this," Durano added.

CITM is one of the largest travel events in Asia, staged alternately between the cities of Kunming and Shanghai. Over 2,000 exhibitors from 92 countries and regions participated in this year's exhibit held in the sprawling 50,000-sqm Kunming International Convention Center.

The four-day affair drew in an estimated 70,000 travel marketers, industry professionals, media and potential tourists from the province and nearby areas.

The DOT marketing team for China set up the Philippines' 90-sqm booth that featured the tropical beaches, expansive golf courses and colorful fiestas around the islands. Brochures and other materials were also given out to visitors.

Leading the country's delegation was DOT Undersecretary for Planning and Promotion Eduardo Jarque Jr. He was accompanied by DOT Team China Marketing Head Arlene Alipio and team member Marian Obispo. Completing the public sector representation were DOT-Shanghai-based Tourism Attache Gerry Panga and DOT Marketing Representative for Guangzhou Martin Pan.

The department's private sector partners and their counterparts conducted a series of business exchanges. Participating tour operators Winfar Cebu Travel & Tours, Direction Travel & Tours, CK Philippines International Travel and Kingstar Travel & Tours met with China-based travel agents for possible joint marketing activities.

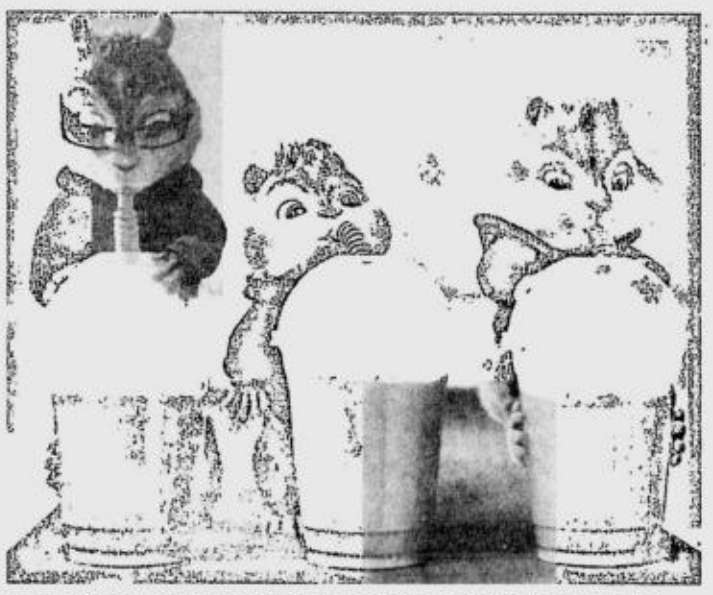
Top local budget airline Cebu Pacific Air and China charter consortium Yexxing Company were also present to discuss transportation services between the Philippines and Kunming.

Representatives of the Philippine Retirement Agency put forth the country as an ideal destination for retiring citizens as it showcased various health and wellness attractions.

The table-top transactions were complemented with ample servings of mango juice and coffee from well-known Filipino brewer Figaro. Samplings of these beverages were also handed out to pavilion guests to give them a refreshing taste of the islands.

The Bayanihan Philippine National Folk Dance Company regaled guests with song-and-dance numbers showcasing the country's diverse and colorful culture. The 12-member troupe drew in a huge crowd during their performances on both the main exhibit stage and the booth.

"Our activities were an instant hit with the visitors. Cameras were clicking away during the Bayanihan shows. Long lines formed in front of the refreshments kiosk. Transactions and agreements were closed. This multi-sensory take on presenting the country helped us drum up interest from potential tourists. More importantly, our private sector partners were pleased with the quality of discussions they had with their Chinese counterparts," Jarque narrated.



'ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS' PRESS SCREENING

The phenomenal singing trio of Alvin, Theodore and Simon harks the opening of 2008 in the invitational press screening of the CGI-live action movie 'Alvin and the Chipmunks' set on Jan. 5 at the Glorietta 4 cinema. 'Alvin and the Chipmunks' tells the exciting story of how Dave first meets the singing animals and how, after initial reluctance, he befriends them. A songwriter himself, Dave Seville (Jason Lee) collaborates with the talented trio and helps to build their careers, little realizing how they would resonate with audiences. But trouble emerges in the form of Dave's college friend Ian (David Cross), now a successful but ruthless music industry exec who wants to exploit The Chipmunks in order to profit himself. The movie, a funny and warm-hearted film based on the well-loved musical trio which has been a part of American culture for 50 years, retains the personalities of the popular animals and of their 'dad' and manager Dave. 'Alvin and the Chipmunks' is an entirely contemporary movie combining the latest computer generated effects (CGI) with live action and a strong, highly relevant story. 'Alvin and the Chipmunks' opens Jan. 16 in theaters nationwide from 20th Century Fox to be distributed by Warner Bros.

BUSINESS Monday

E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/business

Business Features Editor
Margie Quimpo-Espino

Executives' hopes for business in 2008

By Margie Q. Espino and Tina A. Dumlao

We ask movers in the economic sector their projections for the year to come

JOSE E. B Antonio, Century Properties RUDY ESPERAS

DONNIE V. Tantoco, Rustan's Supercenters Inc. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

CECILIO Pedro, Lamoiyan Corp.

Exporting to the Asean

"WE GREW MORE THAN 25 percent in 2007 and we are gearing for the export to Asean and the Middle East where there are many similarities and opportunities yet to be tapped."

Cecilio Pedro
Lamoiyan Corp. (makers of Hapee toothpaste)

Bullish about real estate

Shang Properties experienced robust growth this year. Our Shang Grand Tower was sold out while our St. Francis Shangri-la Place residential development is 70 percent sold. Occupancy plus lease rentals and/or sales for both the Shangri-La Plaza Mall and The Enterprise Center exceeded budget.

Revenues [this year] grew by close to 80 percent compared to 2006.

In June of this year, Edsa Properties Holdings Inc., the property development arm of the Kuok Group in the Philippines, and Kuok Philippine Properties Inc, which owns a landbank of prime properties all over the country, merged to form Shang Properties. This merged entity endeavors to be a key player in the high-end real estate market. Toward the end of this year, we signed a purchase agreement that will enable us to acquire majority control of the Enterprise Center. We also acquired another prime property in Fort Bonifacio Global City.

We are bullish about the Philippine real estate market in 2008 and expect that Shang Properties will continue to grow. We have several new projects in the pipeline and announcements will be made in due course.

Andres D. Bautista
CEO, Kuok Group Philippines

Realize sales potential

Focused on renovating Rustan's. Shopwise stores need to be updated and make the existing stores more competitive by improving service and range of products expanded. Consumer demand was better than 2006 although the Christmas season was late. People are smarter—they hold on to their money to get better deals. Consumer spending is up by 7-8 percent.

The demand for gift baskets this season is high. Health and beauty products are flying off the shelves.

People are buying quality products with reasonable price tags. This cuts across all income groups.

Next year we will focus on the full sales potential under the new management [the Shopwise group under the Rustan Supercenters Inc. took over the management of Rustan's Supermarket and Fresh outlets last year]." We are not yet operating in our full sales potential.

Bienvenido Tantoco III
President, Rustan's Supercenters Inc.

Great 2008

2007 was good, we're looking at a great 2008. The market psychology is positive and the macro fundamentals are good. We hope interest rates stay at current levels. We're looking at launching four products in 2008.

Jose E. B. Antonio
Chair, Century Properties

Cautious about real estate

We had a fabulous 2007. Both property and lotto sales were very good. We are cautious on property [2008] because of subprime woes in the US, and the glut in local condo supply.

Lotto sales will remain strong and maintain a 15 to 20 percent growth rate.

Willy Ocier
Vice chair, Belle Resources Corp.
Chair, Pacific Online Systems Corp.

Int'l security threats for US businesses

WASHINGTON—US BUSINESSES faced varied threats in 2007—including cyber attacks in Europe, theft of intellectual property in Asia, natural disasters in Latin America, terrorism on many continents—according to a yearend analysis by the US State Department's Overseas Security Advisory Council.

In Europe, two weeks of attacks by computer interlopers that crippled government and corporate websites beginning in late April raised a new worry that US companies also could be vulnerable to attack by computer.

"It is vital to recognize that these attacks can easily be replicated against a new target, including the US private sector," warned the council, which was established in 1985 to promote security cooperation between the State Department and American businesses. The report was released on Thursday.

Among 10 security issues cited in the report, the council also warned of rising homegrown political radicalism and terrorism in Europe.

Intellectual property theft, terrorism, natural disasters and political instability were listed as the most serious security challenges in Asia.

The threat from fraud and theft of trade secrets has been rising exponentially, the report said. It cited China and India as countries of greatest concern and warned that much of the damage comes from within companies.

"Osac advises that US companies and other entities should take strong precautions against the insider threat, to safeguard communications systems, and for the safekeeping of sensitive data," the report said.

Continuing political instability in Lebanon and terror attacks in Algeria were cited as the most alarming trends in the Middle East and North Africa.

In other parts of Africa, the report raised alarms about rising crime rates in many cities and a dramatic increase in kidnappings in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria that target workers of Western-owned oil companies.

Earthquakes and storms plagued US business in Latin America in 2007, but the report also cited antagonism from governments, including those of Venezuela and Bolivia.

"Political conflict has emerged as a concern to the US private sector in a few Latin American countries whose leaders have nationalized private industry and campaigned against US interests through proposed constitutional referenda," the reports said.

The council's executive director, Todd Brown, urged US companies to take heed of the developing threats and learn to protect themselves.

"Those US entities that take proactive security postures, manage their risks and develop an internal culture of resiliency often are better able to survive and even thrive in riskier environments or in the aftermath of disasters," he said. *AP*

China falls for Christmas stores

BEIJING—CHINA'S SHOPPING MALLS IN late December leave little doubt that the country has been smitten by Christmas, if not in quite the way devout Christians might hope.

Christmas has secured a spot on the Chinese calendar as a cherished excuse to buy, buy, buy. And while Christianity is indeed spreading in the officially atheist country, many shoppers have only a faint idea of the holiday's religious connection.

But their manner of celebration is sure to win the blessing of at least one group: Economists.

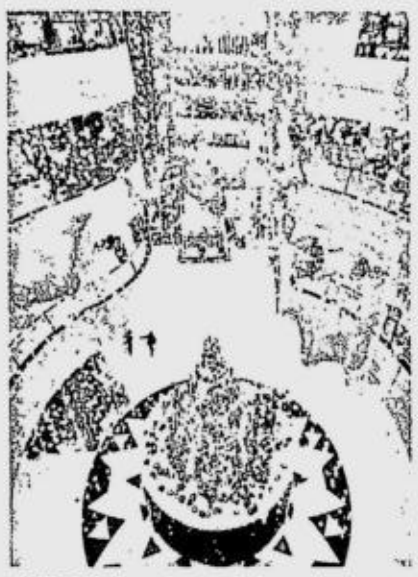
"It's not really a real holiday," said Benny Zhang, 29, a computer programmer outside a Beijing mall with his wife. "It's just a nice atmosphere for shopping and a chance to swap gifts with each other." Economists long despaired that the Chinese propensity to save, not spend, was storing up trouble should China's exports falter, and hurting the world economy because it was not buying enough from abroad.

Even as China has become wealthier, the savings culture has been reinforced by the dismantling of the social security system, which forced ordinary people to keep enough money on hand for education, medicine and old age.

But Christmas reveals that Chinese consumers, buoyed by fast-rising incomes, have now burst on the scene with a fervor for shopping that someday might rival their American counterparts.

"It is hard to get away from cultural norms," said Anna Kalifa, head of research in Beijing for Jones Lang LaSalle, a real estate management firm.

"What is also true is there is a new generation that is coming along and really changing things. They value quality and they want to spend money," she said.



CHINA'S shopping malls leave little doubt that the country has been smitten by Christmas, if not in quite the way devout Christians might hope. REUTERS

Seven of the world's 10 biggest shopping malls will be in China by 2010, Kalifa said.

Hard numbers show why. Retail sales rose 18.8 percent in November from a year earlier, marking the fastest growth since 1999, the National Bureau of Statistics reported this month.

It's Christmas, sort of

Bedecked in trees and bunting, with carols piped through their speakers, Chinese malls are thronged by shoppers at Christmas and look much like ones anywhere else in the world.

The difference lies just below the surface.

Wang Lijun knows her Santa Claus hat and coat are supposed to lure customers to the buffet house in the Beijing mall where she works but beyond that she is confused.

"The boss makes us wear these," the restaurant hostess, 25, said. "I have no idea what they mean." But the hat and coat do the trick. Business is brisk in the restaurant behind Wang as waiters clad in similar Santa Claus outfits scurry among the tables, dodging the poinsettia and fake gifts scattered about the floor.

That the gift-buying element of Christmas has spread faster than the religious rituals of the holiday is seen by some Chinese Christians as more an opportunity than a worry.

"It's nothing to be disappointed about," Liu Bainian, vice president of the China Patriotic Catholic Association, said. "It's good for understanding. From our perspective, it's good for spreading the idea of Christmas." Liu, who often echoes government opinion on church affairs, said Chinese shouldn't get caught up in the commercialism and should instead view the Christmas message as one of world peace much like the "harmonious society" promoted by authorities.

About 40 million Chinese—or 3 to 4 percent of the 1.3 billion population—are Christian, according to the US Central Intelligence Agency.

But precise estimates are hard to come by, as devotees are divided between "above ground" churches approved by the ruling Communist Party and "underground" churches, wary of government ties, that have grown in popularity.

Shopping spree

So long as shopping outpaces churchgoing, Christmas will cheer the hearts of government officials who have been trying to boost consumption to lessen the economy's reliance on exports. *Reuters*

LTO license renewal

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Manuel A. Alcuaz Jr.

A FOR PROCESS IMPROVEMENT, C for governance.

Last Dec. 6, while I was in Subic, I discovered that my license had expired last year!

Friday morning, I decided to renew my license immediately. I asked our messenger where I should renew my license. He said that LTO now had offices at malls and MRT/ LRT stations.

The Ayala MRT Station LTO Office was my nearest and most convenient location.

I took the MRT from Boni to the Ayala Station. I give LTO an "A" for moving closer to its customers.

I found the LTO office slightly before 11 a.m. and got my renewal document.

Whoops, a physical exam (eyes) and drug test is needed. Another A: There is an accredited physical exam and drug test clinic next to the LTO office.

Good instruction giving you steps 1 to 4. In window 1, you pay and get the drug test and medical exam forms.

When I was filling up the form, I was wondering why I had to swear that I don't take drugs when I was going to have a urine test.

When I got my new license in about an hour, I understood the need for swearing.

They can't do the urine test quickly enough so they work on an exception basis. If you fail the drug test, they can subsequently cancel your license. Another "A" in customer convenience and process improvement.

The next step was the physical exam (essentially stepping on an old bathroom weighing scale and trying to read the letters on a mirror).

I got worried because neither my bad left eye nor my good artificial lens right eye could read below the second line of letters. So I guessed and the attendant still said OK. I thought I would have to go to an eye doctor. But apparently I "passed"? Another "A" for customer convenience.

The next day, I was surprised that I could read license plates of vehicles 10 to 20 meters in front of me.

The next step was a webcam camera.

I then got my papers from the clinic cashier window. It must have been 11:30 a.m. when I got back to the LTO office next door.

There was a sign that said come back at 1 p.m.

But they accommodated me. They took another webcam picture and I signed on an electronic pad.

Sat down and waited 5 minutes to be called to pay cashier in window 3.

Waited a few minutes more and got my new license! All in slightly more than one hour.

Definitely, an "A" for the LTO process improvement team!

They have made great improvements. I remember that in the bad old days, you only got an official receipt after a few hours of waiting and had to come back a few months later for the license.

But I noticed that a professional license renewal is P400 and nonpro is P180. Not cheap but fair.

On the other hand, I had to pay P250 for the drug test and P100 for medical (eye test and weight).

This means that for nonprofessional drivers' urine and medical tests, contractors revenues are 1.944 times LTO's revenue.

For professional drivers, the private contractors revenues are 87.5 percent of LTO's.

From January to October 2007, the LTO license renewals and issues were as follows:

- Professional
  Renewal - 1,206,633
  New - 255,832
- Non-Professional
  Renewal - 473,877
  New - 261,633

Total for 10 months - 2,197,975

Assuming that nationwide rates are the same as in Makati:

Drug test revenues would be P549,493,750 (2,197, 975 x 250).

And medical (eye) test revenues would be P 219,797,500 (2,197,975 x 100).

A friend of mine that was in the drug test business says the urine drug test kits cost P80 each. She felt P250 per test was fair.

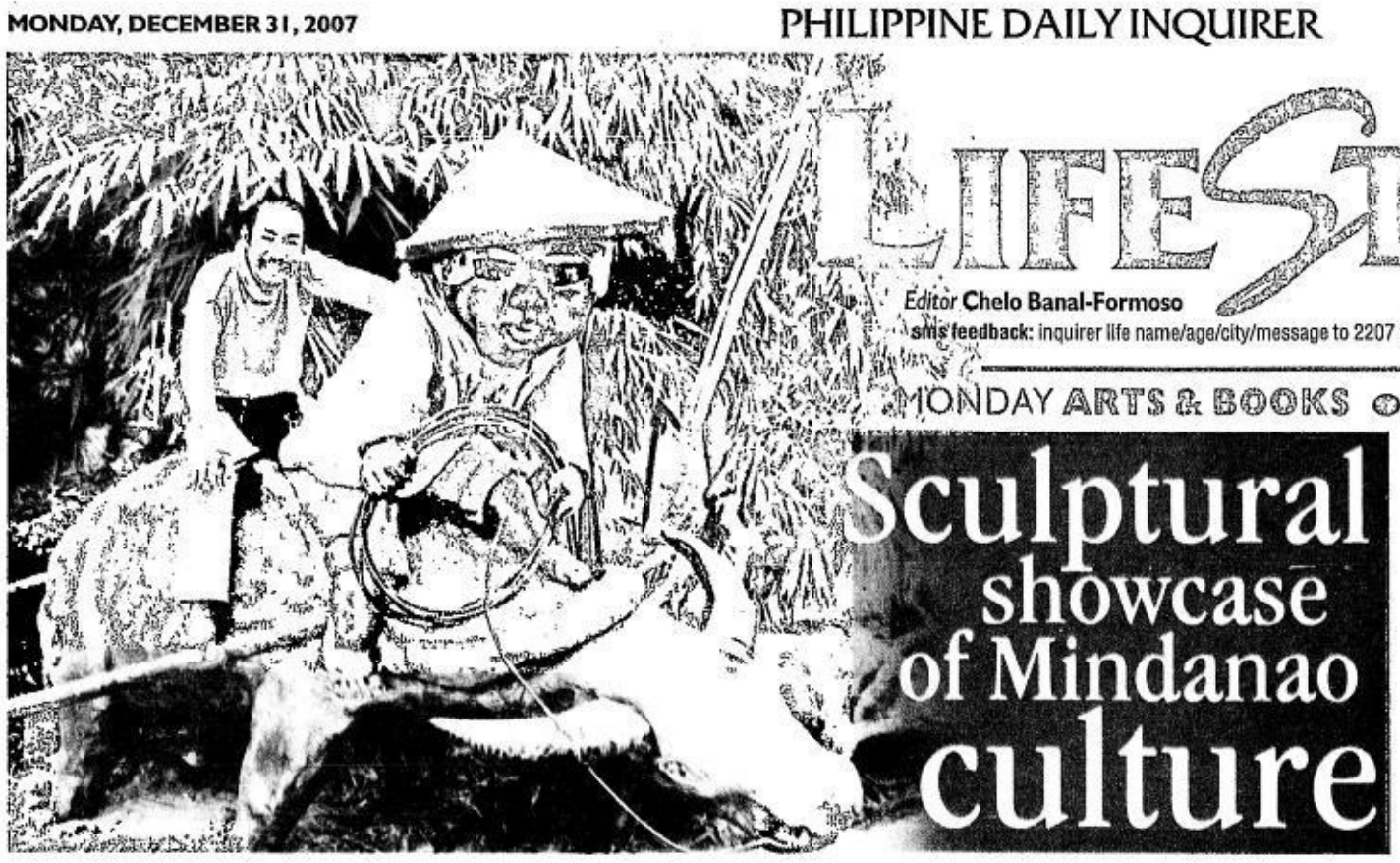
I feel that more competitive bidding could significantly reduce this cost.

I think that the eye testing should use more professional equipment or at least validate their tests against that in professional eye clinics.

I therefore give LTO a "C" for governance. But LTO deserves congratulations for its excellent business process reengineering of the license renewal process.

For a broader perspective of process improvement in government, refer to Ver Peña's Sept. 24, 2007 article.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is president of Systems Sciences Consult Inc. Feedback at mapsec@globehet.com.ph)



LIFESTYLE
Website: www.inquirer.net/lifestyle
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso Subsection Editor Lito B. Zulueta
sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) or email us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph
MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY 2BU

Sculptural showcase of Mindanao culture

NOW OPEN! Quezon Ave
SOON TO OPEN! Timog
Pamper your skin... for less
Diamond Peel P600
Warts Removal, per area* P7,700
*Small Warts Only
IV Placenta, 4 sessions P10,000
IPL Photorejuvenation, 4 sessions P12,000
Full Face
IV Glutathione, 10 sessions P15,000
Thermashape, 6 sessions P17,500
Until January 6, 2008
Per DTI-NCR No.5169, Series of 2007
QUEZON AVE 382-2222 / 0922-8081210
ROBINSONS MIDTOWN 567-1968 / 0928-2513378
GREENHILLS 722-9123 / 0922 - 8463482
BINONDO 244-6888 / 0906 - 3456111
SM FAIRVIEW 939 - 1105 / 0906 - 4765304
ALABANG 842-8484 / 0922 - 8080716
MAKATI BEL - AIR 751-6140 / 0917 - 9649828
GODIVA Skin Station

Kublai Ponce Millan's sculptural odyssey across Mindanao is a virtual tapestry of form and tradition, brave and proud, monumental in size, scope and vision

By Johnathan Libarios Rondina
Contributor

MANY DABAWENYOS consider Davao City's newly opened People's Park a very timely holiday gift. The P71-million, four-hectare facility includes a mini-rainforest, series of dancing fountains, automated waterfall, winding bicycle trails and jogging paths, picnic groves, multipurpose *durian*-domed hall.

Since its formal opening on Dec. 15, residents and tourists alike have come here in droves, basking in the warm sunshine, communing in an atmosphere of graciousness and unapologetic holiday spirit.

Entrance to the park is free but, as Mayor Rodrigo Duterte is quick to point out, not without a few restrictions. Vendors are not allowed inside the park and only Filipino music will be aired through its high-tech sound system.

Public displays of affection, at least those of the illicit kind, are strictly banned from the premises and monitored via strategically positioned CCTV surveillance cameras.

'Lumad' images

That the park is a showcase of Mindanawon culture is evident in the many sculptures of *lumad* children in colorful traditional garb found throughout the recreational facility.

These sculptures by artist Kublai Ponce-Millan are a testament to Mindanao's glorious heritage and a statement of unfettered optimism for its future.

Millan's oval-faced, wide-eyed urchins evoke the calm and genteel demeanor that characterizes the Dabawenyo. In this open and inviting landscape, people and sculptures come together, grateful in bountiful harvest, joyful and united in shared art, tradition and experience.

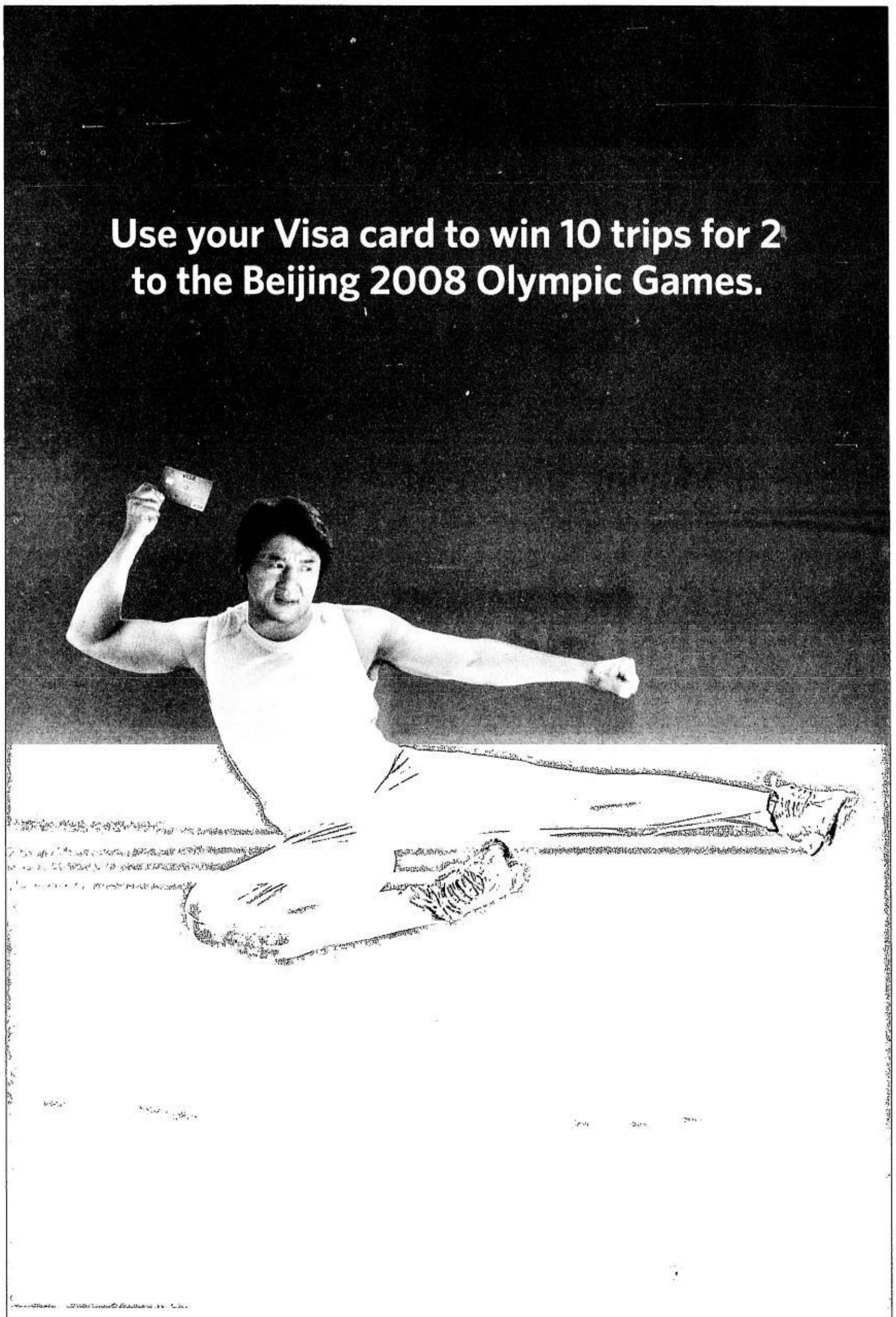
Children prominently figure in Millan's more recent works, an obvious effect of fatherhood for the Cotabato-born artist.

"We really have to start thinking about the kind of world we are creating for our children," he said.

To make sure his message does not fall on deaf ears, Millan has literally taken to the streets by transforming public spaces into broad canvases that depict indigenous pride, peace, ecumenical spirituality and ecological harmony.

SCULPTURAL/ C2

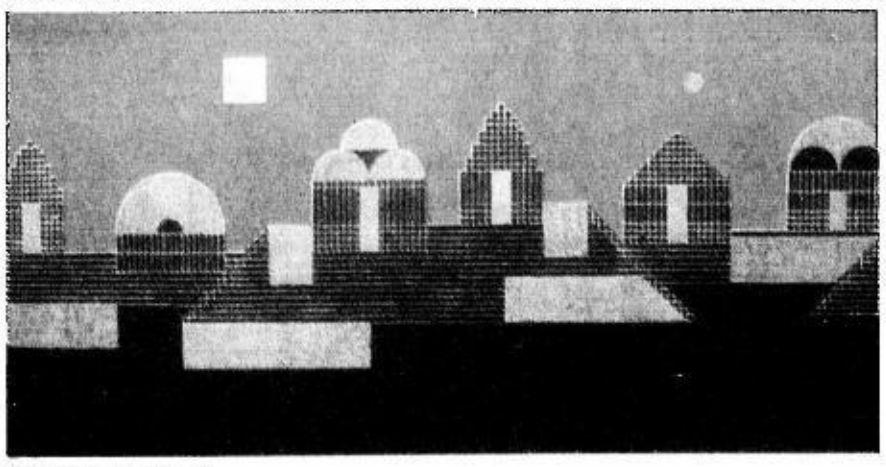
"LUMAD Children" I



Simply register a minimum ₱1,000 single receipt Visa purchase for a chance to win two roundtrip air tickets, Olympic Games tickets, hotel accommodation and transfers for a 3D/2N stay in Beijing. You can also win limited edition Visa Olympic Games Memorabilia. For details, text VISA to 325 for Smart and Talk 'N Text, 2361 for Globe and TM, or log on to www.visasupporters.com

Promotion runs from November 15, 2007 to January 15, 2008. Terms and conditions apply.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5708, Series of 2007. See flyers for more information.

Beijing 2008
VISA WORLDWIDE PARTNER



"CITIES of the Past"

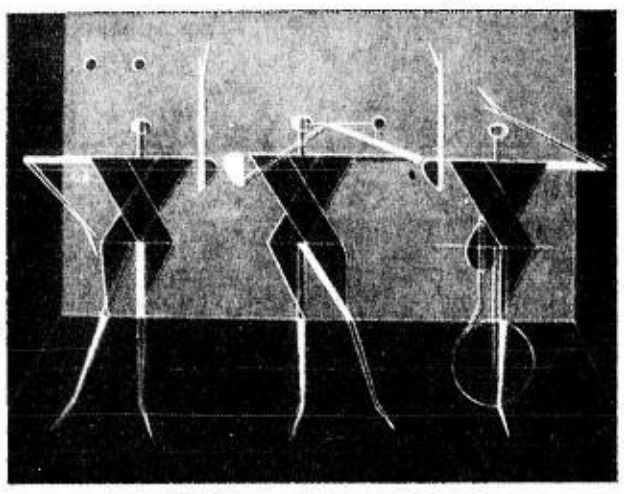
Top Luz series on display

NATIONAL Artist Arturo Luz's foremost series on "Temples," "Cities of the Past" and "Performers" are on show until today in Galerie Raphael.

Included in the show are several major pieces such as Luz's "Cities of the Past" and 1992's "Borobudur."

Also in the show are two acrylic-on-canvas works—"Three Performers" and "Two Musicians and a Juggler."

Galerie Raphael is at Unit 2C-06, 2/F, The Piazza, Serendra Mall, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Call 8563034 or visit www.galeriejoaquin.com



"THREE Performers"

"MADJAPAHIT Pots"

Images of longing and dread

GERALDINE JAVIER BEGINS THE YEAR with an exhibit that explores the human condition through cautionary tales and stark images: "Living Images, Leaden Lives," at the Art Center, SM Megamall, Jan. 5-20.

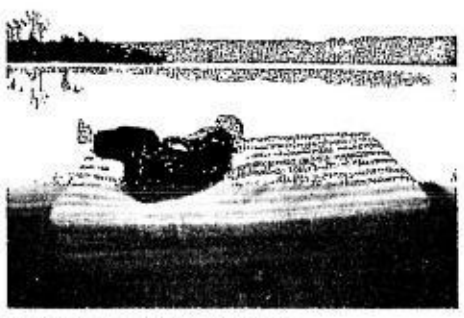
Javier's paintings almost always leave you with conflicting emotions of longing and dread; the ambiguity of fear and desire, notes a fellow artist.

The images seem to activate dormant emotions and awaken irrational, unarticulated childhood anxieties—letting viewers in on sensitive situations and captivating them with her keen attention to detail and recurring motifs.

Viewers are also prepared to see the visual twists and turns, as if leading them from one highlight to another.

Where does Javier get all these inspiration for her works? Is it from her experience as a nurse that gave her first-hand accounts of daily human drama in the confines of the emergency ward? Or did pop culture lend a hand to motivate her to go for more dramatic elements?

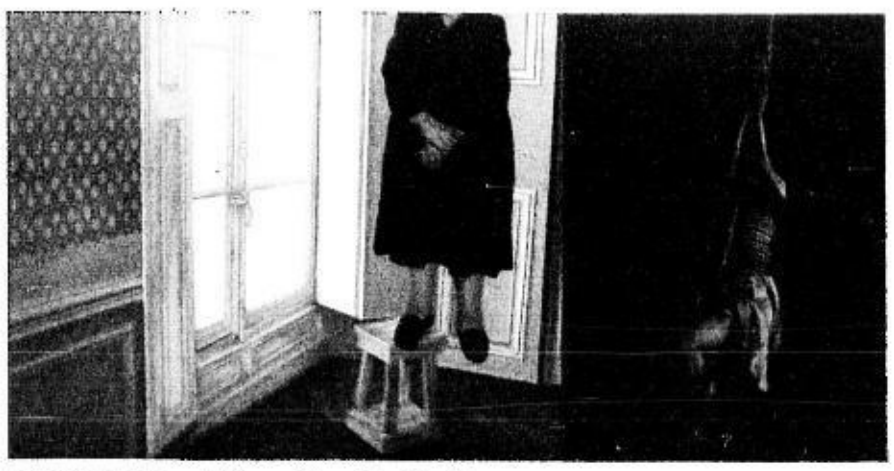
The diptych "Morning Doesn't Always Mean Sunshine" dwells on old age ad youth. One is a headless figure of an elderly woman; the other is that of a young girl on a swing—both images reflecting how the passage of time has affected them, physically and emotionally.



"LAST Thing I Want to See"

"Life Ends at Second Childhood" features an ancient figure struggling before a bathroom sink. Supported by an aluminum walker, the viewer senses both helplessness and hopelessness. The angle of focus gives the viewer a child's perspective, imbued with brooding apprehension, and a curious detachment of observing someone else's struggle.

"The Last Thing I Want to See" depicts a derelict figure in a fetal position on a mangy mattress, resembling a raft on expansive body of water. This is a forlorn image of world-weariness, a man adrift in a sea of serenity offering both acceptance and deliverance.



"MORNING Doesn't Always Mean Sunshine"

Sculptural showcase . . .

From page C1

Big body of work

The People's Park is but one stop in Millan's sculptural odyssey across Mindanao where, at 33, he is a legend of sorts, with a body of work that surpasses those of other artists more senior in years.

Indeed, Millan's oeuvre is monumental not only for its size but also for its courage, sense of pride and artistic vision. With a frenetic energy masked by a quiet disposition, Millan is weaving a massive tapestry of form and tradition throughout the island.

Today, Millan's gigantic sculptures punctuate the Philippines' southern landscape and are becoming tourist attractions that elicit awe and admiration.

Visitors arriving at the new Davao airport are welcomed by a giant *durian*-womb. Residents in Sultan Kudarat marvel at a colossal sword. Revelers on Camiguin are enraptured by forest *diwata*. Pilgrims find solace at the Tagum Cathedral.

Elsewhere in Mindanao, Millan's creatures, drawn from such disparate inspirations as folklore, urban myth and current events, are conversation pieces that captivate, shock and provoke.

Also soon to rise in Buda, the area where Bukidnon meets Davao, is a 75-ft Buddha statue. In Millan's Buddha in Buda, Zen spirituality meets *lumad* sensibility.

9/11 experience

But, like all great odysseys, Millan's artistic journey is not without the requisite, life-altering descent to hell that prefigures redemption.

In the post-9/11 paranoia that shaped American foreign policy after the World Trade Center attacks in 2001, Millan was forced to cancel a scheduled exhibit in the United States when his visa application was denied.

"I was very angry," he recalled. "This is a free planet. Who were they to tell me where I can and cannot go?"

The artistic spirit in Millan felt bound, gagged, confined. It was only a matter of time before his fury would be unleashed into an explosion of creative expression.

Unconventional

Millan found refuge in Ponce Suites, a family-run hotel in Davao's Bajada district. There, the artist found a blank slate, begging to be drawn upon. And so he drew, painted, installed, sculpted, often going without sleep for days.

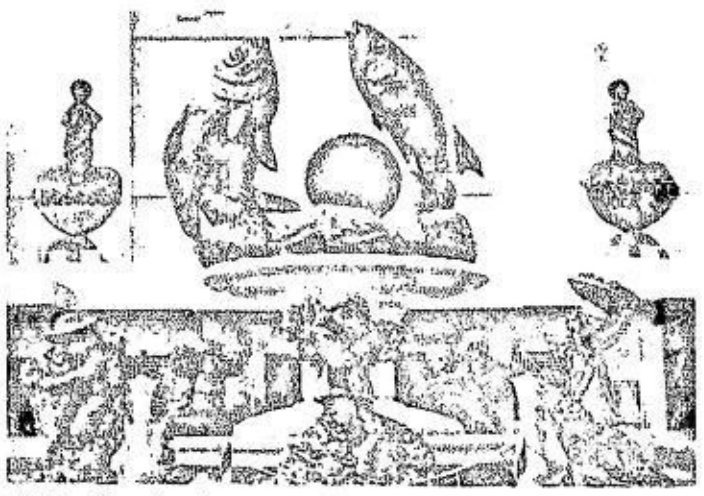
The product was a one-of-a-kind hotel teeming with ants crawling through ceilings, with walls nary an inch uncovered with paintings, and where winged giants spilled over to the narrow street outside. It was, for some, a disturbance of the peace, but in this prolific journey through catharsis, Millan found transcendence.

It was also then that Millan discovered the power of three-dimensional form.

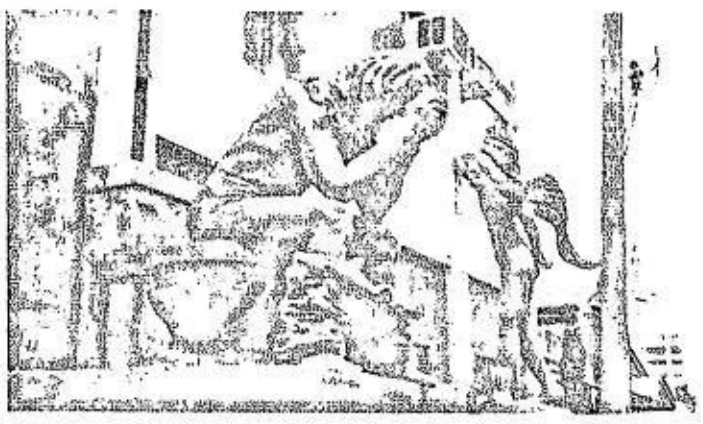
"Sculptures naturally invite attention," he explained. "And big sculptures capture the imagination."

In this marriage of form and size, Millan found a potent tool, and a unique voice that is now leading the way in contemporary Mindanao art.

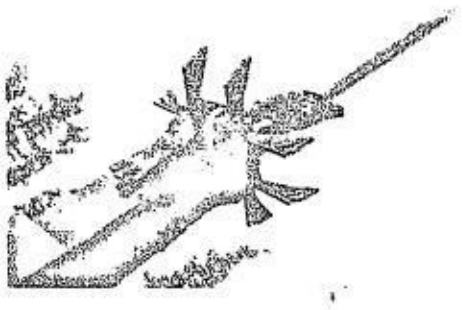
"LUMAD Children" 2



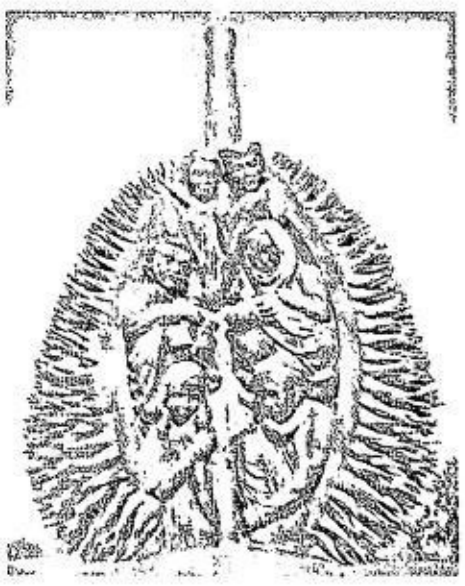
FISH and bread sculpture grace Tagum Cathedral's entranceway.



AN URBAN thinker and a sad angel spill over from Ponce Suites to the street. Right: Sultan Kudarat's *kampilan*



A GIANT *durian* welcomes guests arriving at the new Davao airport.



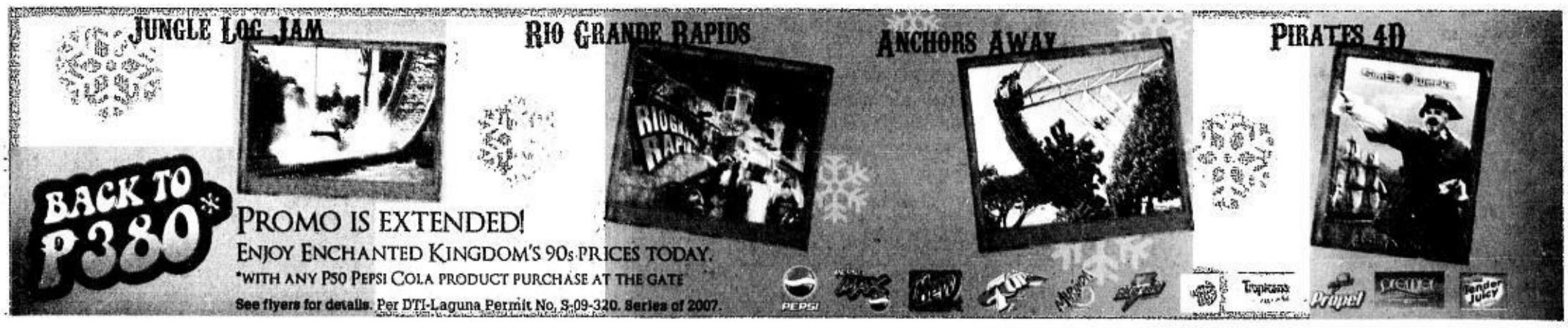
UNCONVENTIONAL center. Davao's Ponce Suites is teeming with giant ants.

People who come face to face with Millan often find it difficult to reconcile the artist's painful timidity with his larger-than-life works. A group of students who interviewed him for a school project were so surprised by his diminutive stature and sage-like countenance they exclaimed, "*Ay, ikaw lang pala si* Millan."

There is, of course, much more to the artist. Among the *lumads*, it is a common belief that a human spirit dwells in his good works long after death, contrary to the Shakespearean admonition that "the evil that men do liveth after them, the good often interred with their bones."

In his journey from rejection to redemption, Millan makes a bid for immortality one giant sculpture at a time.

E-mail the author at nathrondina@gmail.com.



Nativity eggs on exhibit

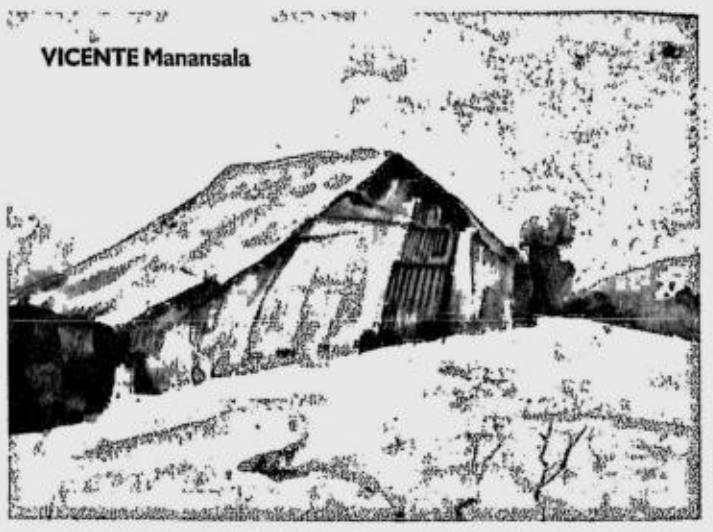
"NATIVITY Resin & Eggshell" (left) and "Eggcology"

SALVADOR CHING'S "EGGCOLOGY," A TRAVELING collection featuring eggs as a discourse on birth, is the yearend exhibit of 1/of Gallery in Shops at Serendra, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig.

Although the show is timed for the Yuletide because of its theme of "Nativity," the series really alludes to the Western practice of using Easter eggs as symbols of the reborn Christ. For instance, "Bunso" is a metaphorical installation connoting the process of gestation, birth and nurturing.

"Eggcology" runs until Jan. 12. Call 9013152.

"BUNSO"



VICENTE Manansala

Pinoy masters on exhibit

GALERIA FERNANdo Artes (Casa Susana, Casa Vicente, Madrigal Avenue, Alabang) is holding the show "Maestro, Filipino," featuring the works of Filipino masters Guillermo Tolentino and Vicente Manansala.

Also included are works by Oscar Zalameda, Gus Albor and Caloy Gabuco.

The show runs until Dec. 31. Call 9060809 or 0928-2188516.

GUILLERMO Tolentino

Two painters'

From page C4

dre des Arts et Lettres from the French government.

But as this show demonstrates, he is still experimenting with the basic elements. Already a master artist, Cosio can still be playful with color and form. And that's what makes his art ever so young.

Southern weave

Related to Cosio's abstracted representation of fiber art are Leopoldo Aguilar's exquisite pieces in acrylic on canvas recently displayed in ArtistSpace, 2/F, Glass Wing, Ayala Museum, Makati Ave. cor. De la Rosa St., Makati City.

At first glance, we could see this art falls on geometric abstraction, a lot of bull's-eye targets reminiscent of Kenneth Noland and Josef Albers in their homage to the circle and the square.

To describe his art-making, Aguilar has coined a portmanteau term, *simplicated*, to mean "both simple and complicated." Because though he employs the purest form—the circle, the simple line—it actually conceals complex motifs and complicated patterns.

He says he has drawn inspiration from the *tugaya* design of the Maranao of Lanao del Sur. His composition has been derived from patterns of their brassware and ethnic weave, the *malong*.

These are patterns composed of series of straight lines *(lapis)*, circular designs *(katiambang)*, and a range of geometric variations. From them Aguilar has created richly hued forms that resemble color wheels, target marks, even a tree's annual rings.

Local sources

"Father & Son" consists of two clusters of concentric circles in various tones of brown, purple, gray and slate-green against a plane of umber. With one cluster half-bigger than the other, the artist wittily describes the composition as "hierarchy in circles."

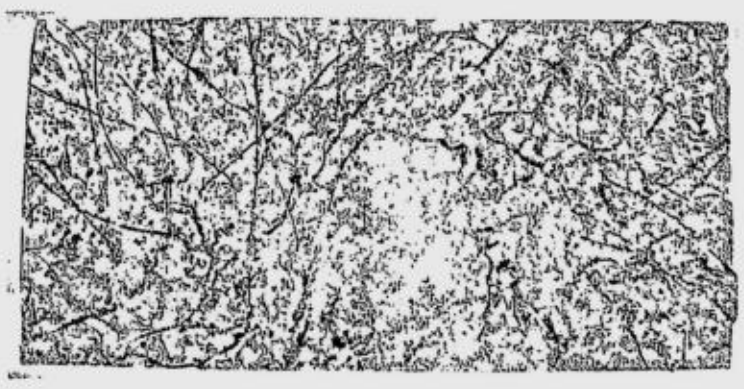
"Light Post" consists of three such clusters in various tones of brown, orange, red, slate-blue, white, black and violet against slate-gray. With the third cluster cut up into two rectangles placed right under the two other circular forms like sticks to lollipops, the artist describes the composition as a "mandala within a standing figure."

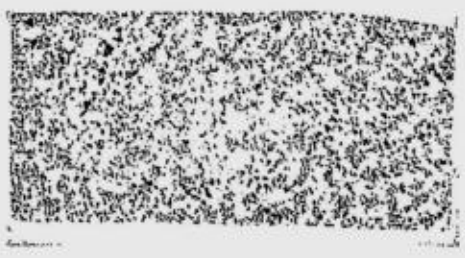
The exhibition note reveals that, as a Fine Arts freshman at University of the Philippines Cebu College in search of directions, Aguilar sought out local artistic sources. "Local expressions continue to be a source of inspiration for him," it adds.

The simple form also belies a complicated technique. Devising tools he calls "applicators," he transformed plastic tubes filled with acrylic pigment and tipped them with air pin needles, then applied the pigment directly on the canvas, producing fine quick strokes and a textured surface.

"The distinctive linear marks," says the note, "clearly respond to his concern for finding ways to paint other than using the conventional paintbrush."

The art of the young is ever ingenious, making room for deeper explorations and bigger discoveries. Aguilar is neither the discoverer of such tools nor the first explorer of such technique, but such quest certainly makes art richer.





COSIO'S abstracted representations of Cordilleran weave

OSCAR Zalameda

WHY SING CAROLS WHEN YOU CAN SCREAM THEM INSTEAD?

WITNESS ACROBATIC DIVERS PLUMMET 80 FEET THROUGH THE AIR AT THE HIGH DIVE INTO CHRISTMAS SHOW DAILY FROM DECEMBER 2, 2007 TO JANUARY 6, 2008 AT THE FOLLOWING TIMES:

WEEKDAYS 2:00PM 4:00PM 6:00PM WEEKENDS 2:00PM 4:00PM 6:00PM 8:00PM

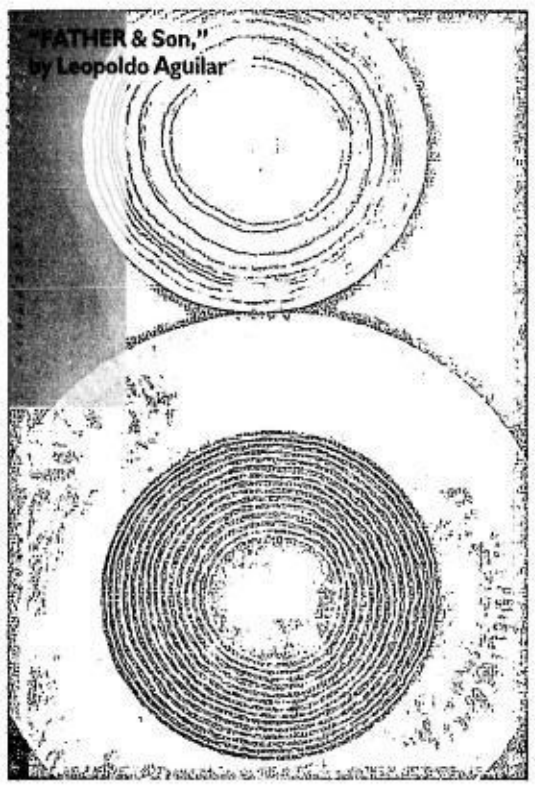
BRING FRIENDS AND FAMILY ALONG FOR A ROWDY GAME OF TRIASSIC TAG – A LIVE ACTION COMBAT GAME THAT USES SPECIAL WEAPONS WITH INFRARED LIGHT PULSES, OR GO ON HEART-POUNDING ADVENTURES AT THE JUNGLE LOG JAM, RIO GRANDE RAPIDS, ANCHORS AWAY, AND PIRATES 4D.

ENJOY AN EXHILARATING CHRISTMAS AT Enchanted Kingdom AS IT CELEBRATES ITS 12TH YEAR OF MAGIC!

Park Address: San Lorenzo South, City of Santa Rosa, Laguna • Tel. No. 843-60-74 to 76 • Makati Sales Office: Ground Floor, The Biltmore Condominium, 102 Aguirre St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. • Tel. No. 830-21-11 to 16
Website: www.enchantedkingdom.com.ph • Email: eldarthewizard@enchantedkingdom.com.ph

Two painters' take on fiber art

By Constantino C. Tejero



"FATHER & Son," by Leopoldo Aguilar

ALLAN Cosio transforms seemingly random brushwork into rigorous composition.

HERE IS ANOTHER CASE OF convergence of abstraction and figuration. Almost inevitably, the twain do meet in the latest work of Allan Cosio.

In the last few years, this artist had been mounting exhibits of his expressionist portraits and impressionistic landscapes. Recently he has taken as subject something minute and blown it up, that is, magnified the form to extreme close-up till it has assumed an abstracted look.

We're talking of his exhibit of pieces in acrylic and latex paint on rubber, ongoing through December in Le Soufflé at Amorsolo Square in Rockwell Center, Amorsolo Drive, Makati City.

These are nearly 50 pieces of varying sizes that appear to be the typical spattering of Abstract Expressionism. Seen up close, the pieces look no more than random brushwork, swirls and splashes and clusters of innumerable dots of pure color, both brilliant and muted, chromatic and neutral. Seen at a distance, however, each piece slowly transforms into a rigorous composition of patterns.

In the late 1980s, Cosio had worked with the weavers of Benguet and created one-of-a-kind wall hangings, some of which he exhibited along with pieces by American fiber artists and those by Austrian fiber artists in two shows at the Metropolitan Museum of Manila.

After almost two decades, Cosio must have been so much fascinated with the intricacy of motif, fineness of execution and rich color tonality of the ethnic weave of our northern folk that he is still trying to replicate it even in painting.

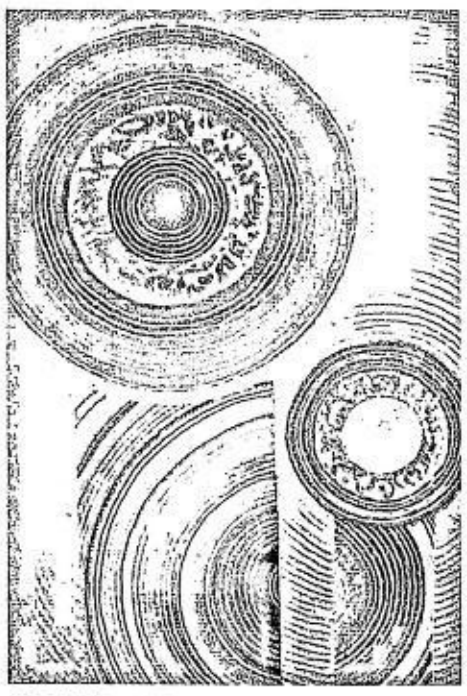
Northern weave

These paintings are, of course, representations of the fiber art of the Philippine Cordillera. They may be taken as abstract but they're actually no more abstract than the very fabric—every line and thread, every hue and pattern—of the textile they represent. Each piece, in fact, displays the intricateness, delicacy and bold colorism of that weave.

If these paintings look too decorative for one's taste, that's because they're exactly meant to be decorative, representing as they do ethnic tapestries and indigenous wall hangings. It's not trompe l'oeil but rather impressionism, and what the artist does not replicate with actual material he duplicates in virtual form.

Active on the local art scene since the early '70s, Cosio has worked in various mediums and experimented in a range of styles and techniques. He received a grant from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation of New York; a cultural award from the city of Manila; and the rank of Chevalier de l'Or-

TWO PAINTERS'/ C3



"LIGHT Post," by Aguilar

BY COSIO

Christmas Special

GREAT DISCOUNT!

for every 2

SAMSUNG mobile

E250

Mechanics:

• Promo is exclusive only on metallic green and pink E250 phones.
• This promotion is only valid from December 29 to January 15, 2008.

Available at:

8Telcom • 3' S Celfone Republic • ABC Store • Addessa Corporation • ADI Akthar • Angel Telecom • Aerophone • Alpha Delta • AMB Communication • Asian Home Appliances Ayangel Celphone • Audionet • AWM Telecom • Baby- G • Balinda Telecom • Beeper City • Benerson Trading • Berlein Electronics • Best Mobile • Best Product • BluePoint Marketing BSD International • BusyTone • Cable Access • Call & Text • Celfone Solution • Celbank • Celloenz • Celicom World • Celphone Lab • Celphone Lab Gen. San • Celluland Telecom Celway • Celway / New Celway • Celshoppe • Celwave Telecom • Celworks • Celvitek • CMK Celphone & Acc. • Comcentre • Comgates • Comworks • Compex • Country Shop Cellular DG Phone • Dr Celfone • Earthlink • E Celphone • Edge Com/Cell4Less/Wireless R Us • Electelcom • Enigma • E Phone / Orange • Evegonz • Faith Computer • Fone Passion • Fone Range Fone Style Accessories • Gadgets in Style • Galaxy Telecom • Galoon Enterprise • Games & Gadgets • GC Masangcay • Genbit • Globotel Mobilelinks • GMI • Graphics • Gruentelcom Ground Zero • Guanzon • G2 Telecom • Hello Telecom • Herrera Brothers • Highland Telecom • Ibcom • Ilmyn Trading • Inbox Personal • Innovasia • Intercall • I Pixel • Janvik • J & F Access J & L Eezy Access • JS Celishop • Junrex • JV Shop & Shop • Kire Equipments Sales • KND Fonehaus • Lijen- Jenk • LQS Celphone Sales & Service Center • Magic Link • Master Land • Moe • Magcellular Mega Exchange • Mamo Express • MFT Electronics • Mike's Department • Milington Mobile Connection • Mobile Expert • Mobile Networks • Mobile Territory • Mobile Works • Mr Dynamics Ms. Rosa Tan • Multimedia • My Fone • North Western • Novacell • NST Cell Center • Ocampos • Opps Celphone Center • Oxford • Pak & Save • P. Aldana • PC Quickink • Perfect Com • Phone Bytes Phone Plus • Phones & Gadgets • Phone World • Pinas Mub • Power House Distributon • Power Telecom • Prosnet • PSALM • Quality Cellular Phone Center • QSL • R-Khan • RC Goldine Rimvell Ent. • Rizwan • RLDA • Robertson • Roundcorda • Rufis • Roxas Ent. • Save n' Earn • Shoppersmart • Sideworks • Sign On Electronics • Skyoom • Sonny Enterprises • Star Search

Exclusively Distributed by:

www.firstasiamobile.com.ph

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4541 Series of 2007

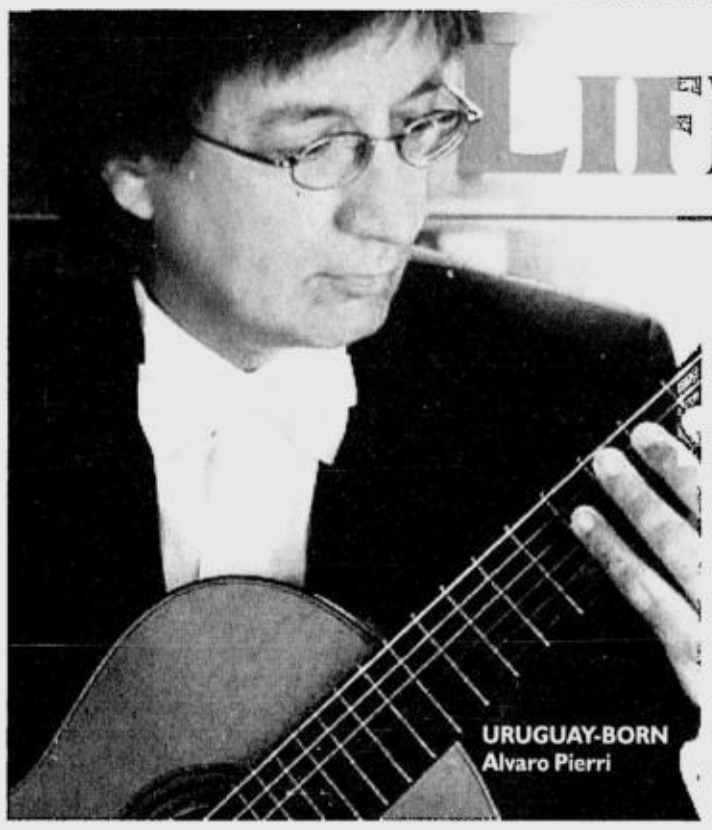
LIFESTYLE

For feedback, e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Website: www.inquirer.net/lifestyle

Text us your feedback:
inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Double Your Luck!
"MARITES ALLEN'S FENG SHUI WAYS TO WIN-Part 2"
[redacted]
FENG SHUI INTERVIEWS
WORLD OF FENG SHUI
TRIVIA: 16 To what animal grouping would the Ox, the Snake, and the Rooster belong?
ANS: a.The Competitors b.The Diplomats c.The Intellectuals d.The Independents
To join, SMART and GLOBE/SUN subscribers simply have to submit a pag - time registration by saying in THESS REG <name/address/age/gender> (Ex. THESS REG Bons Ryl/Gold St. Marikina City/2317) and send it to 2861. To answer, Send THESS <letter> to 2861
Yesterday's answer: d.Sheep and Boar
Marites Allen Philippines 2008 Feng Shui Extravaganza Updates
YEAR OF THE EARTH RAT
WOFS HOTLINE • 914 7888 • 412 6888 • 0920 9509390
Watch out every FRIDAY at [illegible] for the announcement of the weekly winners
For DTI NCR series no. 4385 of 2007. Promo Period: Dec. 3, 2007 to Jan. 7, 2008



URUGUAY-BORN Alvaro Pierri

Music movers of 2007

RUSSIAN pianist Sergey Kuznetsov

Despite lack of support, the performing arts continue to thrive

YOUNG pianist Otavio Licad Meneses

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

FOR HER triumphant team-up with pianist Cristine Coyiuto, in a fresh rendering of the Grieg concerto and her powerful Fifth Symphony by Tchaikovsky with the Manila Symphony Orchestra, my Conductor of the Year is Helen Quach, still a dynamo of the baton in her 60s.

For winning the choral Olympics twice—first in 1997 and this year—my Choir of the Year is the Philippine Madrigal Singers, under new conductor Mark Anthony Carpio.

For electrifying Metro Manila's guitar community and for reaching out to Manila guitar teachers and students before and after his Manila debut, my Classical Guitarist of the Year is Uruguay-born Alvaro Pierri.

For enchanting both young and old in one concert, my Piano Team-up of the Year is the mother-and-son team of Cecile Licad and Otavio Licad Meneses, with the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra under Eugene Castillo.

For making Manila audiences fall in love with the violin many times over, and for raising piano consciousness as well in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, and in Bacolod City, my Violinist of the Year is Romanian Alexandru Tomescu.

For bringing back the beauty of the baritone voice to Manila audiences and for that landmark recital at the Philamlife Theater with the University of Santo Tomas Singers, my choice for Baritone of the Year is Noel Azcona.

She is always the perfect choice to accompany both singers and instrumentalists and her latest team-up with Tomescu and Azcona this year drew raves from both critics and audiences.

Therefore, my Assisting Artist of the Year is Mary Anne Espina, who deserves her recent Aliw Award many times over.

For wrapping up a total of 273 educational concerts nationwide and in some cities in Asia and United States, my Music Missionaries of the Year are

MUSIC/ D2

Johnny Yu slates marimba concert

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

MARIMBA ARTIST JOHNNY Yu will give a concert on Jan. 13, 4:30 p.m., at the St. Stephen Auditorium of St. Stephen High School on Masangkay Street, Manila.

Joining him on stage are Dean Raul Sunico of the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music; tenor Conrado "Dindo" Ong III; and St. Stephen Chorale conducted by Patricia Lim.

The program will consist of light classics as well as European, American and Philippine works such as Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue," and standard choral pieces such as "Majesty" and "My Tribute."

Presented by the St. Stephen Alumni Association, of which Yu was previously a board member, the show is a thanksgiving concert.

Yu survived a stroke three years ago, and has gone back to playing the marimba, his avocation.

"Music is all for the glory of God, transcending all religions," he said.

A stockbroker by profession, Yu is an accomplished marimba artist who made his debut recital at Carnegie Hall in New York City in 1973.

After finishing a business degree at De La Sale University-Manila, he went to Sta. Isabel College and earned his marimba course with professor Ernestina Crisologo-José.

He trained with Walter Rosenburger, percussionist of New York Philharmonic Orchestra; professor Broadley Spinney of the Manhattan School of Music; and José Bethancourt, Guatemala's foremost marimba teacher.

He was active on the concert stage before the stroke, and had premiered many foreign as well as Philippine compositions. He gave a command performance in honor of President Chiang Kai Shek on the occasion of the Taiwanese leader's 80th birthday. He has performed as well in the United States and Canada.

He has played with the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra and given concert tours in Cebu, Bacolod, Iloilo, Davao, Zamboanga, Naga, Baguio, Dadiangas and Jolo. He is a recording artist for Legacy Music Word Corporation and Praise, Inc.

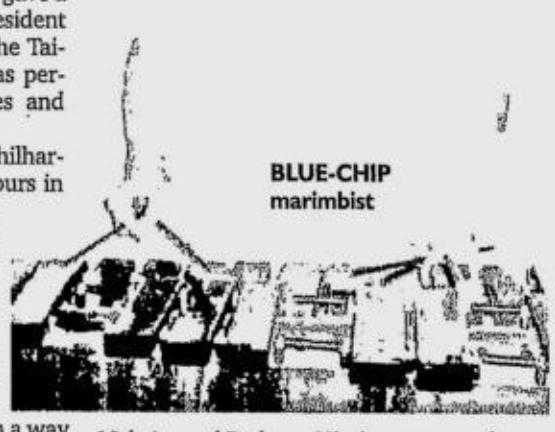
Rarely heard on the concert stage, the marimba is a deep-toned Mexican cousin of the xylophone. Its keys are strips of hardwood or bone, cut in such a way that each bar has a different tone scale.

Under each strip is a resonator that is opened at the top but closed at the bottom by a thin bladder. It matches the tone of its key: the lower the tone, the longer the bar and the deeper the resonator.

The wooden keys are arranged like the keyboard of a piano but vary in size, ranging from large bass keys to small high keys.

Striking the keys with a pair of mallets produces tone. Two types of mallets are used for playing. Mallets made from hard rubber are used for brilliant, loud, percussive sound.

Mallets wound with yarn are used for mellow tones. The player uses two mallets for past passages and four mallets for chords.



BLUE-CHIP marimbist

Paskong Himig champion

The Pasig City Concert Choir composed of employees and residents of Pasig City is this year's champion in the adult category of the 13th Annual Paskong Himig, a contest for solo voice and choir.

Winning by a unanimous decision over 10 other finalists, the choir sang the required *kundiman* warm-up piece, Constancio de Guzman's "Bayan Ko," arranged by National Artist Lucio San Pedro for mixed choir, and Ramon Santos' "Tatlong Maiikling Awit ng Pasko."

Second and third places went to St. John Bosco Chorale, the defending champion, and Coro de San Sebastian, respectively.

The board of judges were composed of Fidel C. Calalang of the UST Singers; Rodolfo "Boy" Delarmente of the DLSU-Manila Chorale; and Noel Azcona, baritone, choral conductor and UST Conservatory of Music faculty member.

A curious note regarding the composers of the competition pieces: The late maestro San Pedro, who hails from Angono, took his primary education at Pasig Elementary School and secondary education at Rizal High School.

Santos, on the other hand, is a full-blooded Pasigueño.

Music, indeed, is a jewel of the city, and, thank goodness, the city government has actively supported the appreciation and dissemination of the musical arts through the holding of the yearly contest.

Exclusively a competition for the different sectors of the town then, it became metrowide in 2005, and has since grown in popularity.

The project was conceived by Soledad C. Eusebio, wife of former Mayor Vicente P. Eusebio (she herself would eventually become mayor). Her son, incumbent Mayor Robert C. Eusebio, and the city council have continued the legacy.

PASIG City Concert Choir

Music movers of 2007

From page D1

pianists Ingrid Sala Santamaria and Reynaldo Reyes.

For giving music competitions a new positive orientation and not making it a cutthroat, if not a traumatic affair, for young musicians, the Music Contests of the Year are the National Music Competitions for Young Artists under program director Montet Acoymo and the Piano Teachers Guild of the Competition Bach-Philamlife Competition under Fr. Manuel Maramba, OSB.

For excellent programming and the unanimous acclaim from both critics and audiences, the Pianists of the Year are all Russians: Sergey Kuznetsov and Ilya Rashkvoskiy, who were recently heard at Philamlife Theater.

Opera treat

The opera treat for January next year is Johann Strauss II's "Die Fledermaus," presented by the UST Conservatory of Music and Cultural Center of the Philippines.

It will feature the country's opera treasures such as Rachelle Gerodias, Andrew Fernando, Noel Azcona and other Thomasian performing artists.

The evening performances at 8 p.m. will be on Jan. 18-19 and 25-26; while 3 p.m. matinees will be on Jan. 19 and 26. Call 7314022.

Licad comeback

Cecile Licad returns to the CCP March 28 with two concertos: Beethoven No. 2 and Tchaikovsky's First.

The concert is presented by the Buencamino Foundation and CCP on the occasion of the 125th birth anniversary of Filipino composer Francisco Buencamino, great granduncle of Licad.

The concert will also mark Licad's 40th anniversary of her orchestra debut at age 7.

After her CCP engagement, Licad will do an outreach tour with the Pundaquit group of Coke Bolipata and the Philippine Youth Symphonic Band first week of April.

Debut recital

US-based pianist Emily Yap Chua had her debut recital at the CCP Little Theater yesterday. Her concert, "An Afternoon of French Piano Music," featured selected works by Debussy, Chaminade and Chopin.

Chua is a graduate of Florida State University. She earned her Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees at the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music.

CONDUCTOR Helen Quach (second from left) with well-wishers during her Manila concert

Adeste Fidelis, a classical music treat

THIS YEAR'S YULEtide season was ushered by Adeste Fideles 2007 at the Plenary Hall of the Philippine International Convention Center.

PRODUCER Eduardo H. Yap

The company of classical artists consisted of sopranos Rachelle Gerodias, Karla Gutierrez, Elaine Lee and Jennifer Uy; tenors Nolyn Cabahug, Abdul Candao, Randy Gilongo, Sherwin Sozon and George Yang.

Josefmo Chino Toledo conducted the Metro Manila Community Orchestra.

Also performing were the Philippine Madrigal Singers and Chiang Kai Shek College Youth Choir under conductress Irma Tan Su.

The tone was set when tenor Cabahug sang Our Lord's Prayer as the invocation.

The orchestra opened up with a robust overture of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" which was especially arranged for Adeste Fideles.

Among the selected music in the program were "Adeste Fideles" ("O Come All Ye Faithful"); the solemn "Panis Angelicum" (Bread of Angels), the favorite Communion song during Catholic Mass; Schubert's "Ave Maria," "Angels from the Realms of Glory," "O Holy Night," "Silent Night," "What Child Is This?"

Particularly well-received was "Light of a Million Mornings," rendered solo by Gerodias.

Pop singer Vina Morales sang the Filipino Christmas standards with tenors Cabahug, Sozon and Candao, who was flown in from his base in Vienna.

The full-company rendition of "Joy to the World," Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" and the encore, "Ang Pasko Ay Sumapit," roused the audience to its feet.

The concert was presented by the Management Association of the Philippines headed by its president, Albert del Rosario, former ambassador to the United States. Co-presenter was Credit Suisse of HK.

The concert was produced by Eduardo H. Yap.

SOPRANO Rachelle Gerodias sings "Light of a Million Mornings."

LARA Maigne of Opera Belles

JACK Salud, Juan Alberto Gaerlan and Sherwin Sozon

Operatic New Year's Eve

HYATT HOTEL AND CASINO MANILA USHERS IN 2008 WITH the New Year's Eve performance from the Philippine Opera Company.

Hold on to your seat as the Three Waiters jump out and surprise the audience with their operatic performances.

Be awed by the dashing good looks of the Three Tenors, who effortlessly sing light classics, popular standards, Broadway songs and everything else in between.

Enjoy the lovely and youthful ladies of the Opera Belles. Also to perform are the Brass Munkeys and DJs from SoundsGood Music.

Floyd Quintos is musical director.

Call 2451234.

JENNIFER Uy, Elber Esquivel and Ana Guillenfeleo

FAME Flores of Opera Belles

EMERALD Headway (EH) vice president Cristy Aspiras, Socorro Ramos of National Book Store, Navis Capital director David Ireland and EH president Miriam Balingit.

Books-and-mags distributor marks 20th year

EMERALD HEADWAY DISTRIbutors Inc., a magazine and book distribution company, celebrated recently its 20th anniversary at Hotel InterContinental.

The firm was founded by Miriam Balingit and Cristy Aspiras. During the anniversary, the two owners gave special recognition to its top retailer-partners and loyal subscribers.

Emerald Headway started in 1987, with the Star magazine. It now provides the Filipino reader with over a thousand international magazine and book titles.

Today, Emerald Headway has grown into a full-fledged multinational company, having established a partnership with Navis Capital Limited, an international investment group based in Malaysia.

New book on Bulacan heritage

A NEW BOOK FEATURING the contributions of Bulacan in the arts has been recently released.

Bulacan has more than her share of national heroes, great composers and poets, artists and writers, and cultural, historical and religious landmarks.

In this attractive, richly illustrated book, cultural author Amadís Ma. Guerrero takes the reader on an armchair tour of the province and reviews Bulacan's prominent personalities in the arts. It focuses on the achievements, past and present, in architecture, visual arts, literature, music, dance, theater and crafts.

Produced by the Provincial Youth, Sports, Employment, Arts and Culture Office (Pyseaco) of Bulacan, and editorial supervision, design and print production by Tactical Mix, "Bulacañana" is the next best thing to an actual educational tour of the province.

Available at Pyseaco, Provincial Capitol, Malolos, Bulacan; call (044) 7916604, 6874920, 0917-8822364.

2008 ORGANIZERS

Start the New Year right with the Best Buy 2008 organizer. These simple leatherette planners come in three different sizes and over 30 designs. Prices range from P109.75-P239.75. Available at National Book Store branches nationwide.

Well-appreciated 'Nutcracker'

The Philippine Ballet Theater's recent production kept both youngsters and adults entertained to the hilt

By Elka Krystle R. Requinta
Contributor

FAYE Tan and Jared Tan, with Flower Fairy; below, Anatoly Panasyukov as Drosselmeier and Katherine Torfeo as Marie

THE NUTCRACKER" HAS come a long way from the ho-hum sideshow that it was when it first played at Russia's Maryinsky Theater in 1892, under famed choreographer Marius Petipa.

Based on revisions by well-known French author Alexander Dumas from a book by E.T.A. Hoffman, the story has since undergone several versions to become the overtly popular Christmas staple that it is today.

But the plot, like Pyotr Ilich Tchaikovsky's delightful music, remains untouched: Young German girl is given a toy nutcracker who saves her from giant mice, then transforms into a prince as they journey to an enchanted land where their bravery is celebrated through a showcase of dances.

"The Nutcracker's" ability to "captivate both the young and young at heart" came true once again with Philippine Ballet Theater's recent production.

Using the Michael Chernov and Gelsey Kirkland adaptation for its show at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Main Theater, the company's stellar cast kept both youngsters and adults entertained to the hilt.

In awe

The audience gaped in awe at the adeptness of the dancers in fantasy characters. Especially lauded were Katherine Torfeo's expressive Marie Stahlbaum, Faye Abigail Tan's passionate Sugar Plum Fairy, and Jared Jehowil Tan's valiant Nutcracker Prince.

Torfeo, in a ruffled white nightgown, looked as if she was barely in her teens. Displaying light and nimble footwork, PBT's resident guest artist executed a round of fouettés and pirouettes that were soft but safe at one point, but her grand jetés near the finale were powerful and jaw-dropping.

Meanwhile, the company's principal danseuse, Tan, was clearly the doyenne of the fairies in movements as passionately expressive as her face. Her willful arabesques, clean chaînés and long lines earned raves as well as her dainty solo during one of the well-loved divertissements.

It was heart-warming to watch Tan's younger brother, Jared, portray the role of the prince who gracefully supported Tan in fish dives and lifts, as well as in her finger pirouettes during the romantic pas de deux.

The younger Tan also shone in his quick but memorable solos, which were filled with exacting barrel turns and great leaps that occupied the entire stage.

Not to be ignored, too, was Anatoly Panasyukov's Godfather Drosselmeier. The company's resident ballet master, who restaged this holiday classic from memories of his days with the Bolshoi, exuded an air of mystery as the man responsible for Marie's journey through the Kingdom of Toyland.

There were a number of other highly entertaining characters which enriched the gaiety of the production. The magic would have been lost without the giant mice led by Marious Martin's Mouse King and the Reeds with Mark Pineda's Pan (yes, the Greek god), which were all in timelessly old-fashioned costumes that added to the charm of the show.

The national dances from Spain, Arabia, Russia and China also alluded to holiday treats, with Nikki Aquino and Jan Parangat's Chinese ribbon-and-fan divertissement as another crowd favorite.

Imperfect

This "Nutcracker," though, is not perfect. The minimalist setting in some scenes (merely an abstract profusion of lights) didn't live up to the traditional grandeur of the story. And the intercultural painting, which depicted some famous structures where the national dances came from, were lost on young audiences who were looking for a more literal view of the fantasy place.

And the corps de ballet wore dismally blank expressions on their faces and were sorely lacking in precision as the Snowflakes and the Flowers, in what were supposed to serve as clinchers to some of the production's dream sequences.

Nevertheless, the corps looked tall, poised and immaculate in their calf-length tutus with drooped sleeves and low backlines.

And the resounding bravos at the end of the generally appreciated production were undoubtedly still well-deserved.

PBT opens its 22nd season next year with "Heritage" on May 16-18; followed by "Darangan at Bantugan" on Sept. 26-28; and "La Fille Mal Gardee" on Nov. 28-30.

E-mail the author at elkarequinta@gmail.com

Performance Beyond Compare
THE TESLAR EFFECT

How does TESLAR technology work?

- Two TESLAR chips inside the watch interact with dual quartz watch movements to create a field of energy
- The watch battery generates an Electric Field and the quartz movement coil creates a Magnetic Field
- The TESLAR chips use these two energy fields to create a unique third field - "Teslar Scalar Field" - that pulses at 7 - 9 times per second (7 - 9 Hertz)
- 7 - 9 Hertz is the same frequency range as the Earth's own natural energy state
- 7 - 9 Hertz is also the same frequency range as signals emitted by the brain when in a calm or meditative state or when athletes are in states of high performance
- This natural signal of calm and relaxation (known as the TESLAR Effect™) travels via an energy channel starting in the left wrist through to the rest of the body's energy field

Immune cell production increases in presence of the TESLAR Effect in laboratory experiment*

Dr. Glen Rein, while at Stanford Medical School, showed that in the presence of TESLAR there was, on average, 137% enhancement of human immune cell growth (in-vitro). A separate test demonstrated that nerve cells (in-vitro) could inhibit their uptake if noradrenalin (a depression-fighting process) by as much as 19.5% in the presence of TESLAR.

Children wearing TESLAR in a recent pilot study showed improved concentration*

In 2001, a 30-day study of 11 children with hyperactivity and attention problems was completed in Henderson, KY. Students were evaluated by teachers prior to beginning the study and again at the conclusion. Overall, per teachers' observations, students showed improvements in their ability to concentrate, play respectfully with other children, relate to adults, and respect authority, among other indicators.

* Philip Stein® TESLAR® is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any diseases. Results cannot be guaranteed as individual results vary

The TESLAR Effect may "help compensate for some of the negative impact of using a cell phone"*

In June 2002, Alternative Medicine Magazine conducted independent product testing which demonstrated that TESLAR may have a positive effect on the human body in the presence of a cell phone. This test measured Heart Rate Variability (HRV), which can be a good measurement of a body's overall response to external stress. This product test concluded that the use of TESLAR "may in fact compensate for some of the negative impact of using a cell phone."

While wearing TESLAR, results suggest a "stabilizing effect" on or even "beneficial stimulation" of nervous system activity.

In 2003, Dr. Nyjon Eccles, MD, saw similar results on patients. Dr. Eccles' HRV tests showed that without TESLAR, the nervous system can become stressed when exposed to an energized cellphone. While wearing TESLAR, results suggest a "stabilizing effect" on or even "beneficial stimulation" of nervous system activity.

The TESLAR Effect may result in "improved cardiovascular fitness"*

In 2005, a Heart Rate Variability study (i.e. Stress Test) published in Explorer Magazine suggests TESLAR wearers may experience a more balanced Autonomic Nervous System related to cardiovascular fitness. Measurements suggest after wearing TESLAR, test subjects experienced improved general cardiovascular fitness related to (1) relaxing the "fight or flight" response; (2) increasing "relaxation response"; and (3) improving adaptability to external users.

"When wearing the watch I experience drastic changes in both my performance level and energy level."

experience
the world's most personally valuable watch

evolutionary
Teslar Technology chips resist the effects of stress and electronic pollution

learn more at www.PhilipSteinTeslar.com

available at all LUCERNE, CHRONOS, SWISSGEAR, & WRISTPOD STORES

PHILIP STEIN

MIKE COROZA with spouse and well-wishers

COROZA with other SEA Write laureates

POET-TEACHER Coroza

SEA Write Award for Michael Coroza

By Gary Devilles
Contributor

POET-IN-FILIPINO MICHAEL Coroza is this year's Philippine recipient of the Southeast Asian Write Award, given out for regional writers by the Kingdom of Thailand.

During the awarding ceremony, Coroza serenaded the guests with a poem he made only for that evening. This year's awarding ceremony was held at the Oriental Hotel in Bangkok, with H.H. Prince Prem Purachatra gracing the event.

Coroza has received major awards from the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature; Talaang Ginto sa Tula-Gantimpala Collantes; and Home Life Magazine National Poetry Contest.

His books, "Dili't Dilim" and "Mga Lagot na Liwanag" were finalists in the National Book Award for Poetry.

Coroza has also widely performed the Balagtasan locally and in Singapore and Hawaii. He recently represented the Philippines in the 10th Kuala Lumpur International Poetry Reading.

As a staunch advocate of Filipinization, Coroza also hosts "Harana ng Puso," a weekly radio show over 104.3 FM that features traditional and classic Filipino songs and poems. The show features the Mabuhay Singers.

Two years ago, the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino bestowed upon Coroza a national award of recognition for his contribution to the development and promotion of the Filipino language and literature.

In interviews and lectures, Coroza bemoans the fact that the Filipino language is always seen as the culprit for English language education of Filipinos and that somehow the proliferation of Filipino in various media is a symptom of this problem.

Such narrow-sightedness for Coroza is the very symptom of our problem in education and not in language acquisition whether in Filipino or English.

Coroza further believes it is the duty of scholars to translate works from its original language (and not only the ones translated already in English) to Filipino for a true revolutionary education of people to be realized.

Coroza is a member of the Filipino Department of Ateneo de Manila University. He lectures at the Graduate School of the University of Santo Tomas (UST). He finished AB Philosophy at the UST Faculty of Arts and Letters and was a writer-editor of the Varsitarian, the official student organ of UST, during his college days.

PRIDE OF PLACE
Augusto Villalon

25 years of Café Ysabel

MY FAMILY WENT TO CAFÉ Ysabel the other week to celebrate its 25th anniversary. We had been invited to a special dinner prepared and orchestrated by superchef Gene González, his son Gino, and their students from the Center for Culinary Studies.

Twenty-five years ago, Café Ysabel started out in a former fruit store on lonely Wilson Street in suburban San Juan, the first restaurant to open in what has now become one of Manila's premier restaurant streets.

We lived a short block away, practically the café's only neighbors, separated by empty fields of grass.

My family had just about moved into Café Ysabel, where we went very often and were totally at ease, certainly well fed with our menu favorites and, often enough, surprised with new offerings destined for future menus.

Today's Café Ysabel is the restaurant in a pre-World War II house standing on a San Juan hill, one of the best surviving examples of the old green-and-white San Juan-style '*bahay bakasyunan*' (vacation home) built when the hilly area was a weekend retreat for Manileños escaping the heat of the city.

Latticed verandas wrapped around the two-story wooden houses that were designed to maximize the crisp San Juan air. Although Café Ysabel's second-story verandas have been glassed-in and air-conditioned, the old San Juan feel is still there.

The menu, a journey recalling all of Gene's restaurants past and present, deserves to be published.

Notable menus

Lasap: Amuse Guelle, Mango and Squid Pannacotta, Alamang Wafers.

Trattoria di Gino: Mele al Forno with Foie Gras, Mixed Greens, Candied Walnut, Fine Tarte Croustillante, Cricova Muscat.

Café Ysabel: Crustacean Three Ways (Jelly / Bisque / Chawan Mushi).

Gino's: Roasted Seabass in Sautéed Ferns, Breton Whisked Butter, Monkey Bay Sauvingbon Blanc 2006.

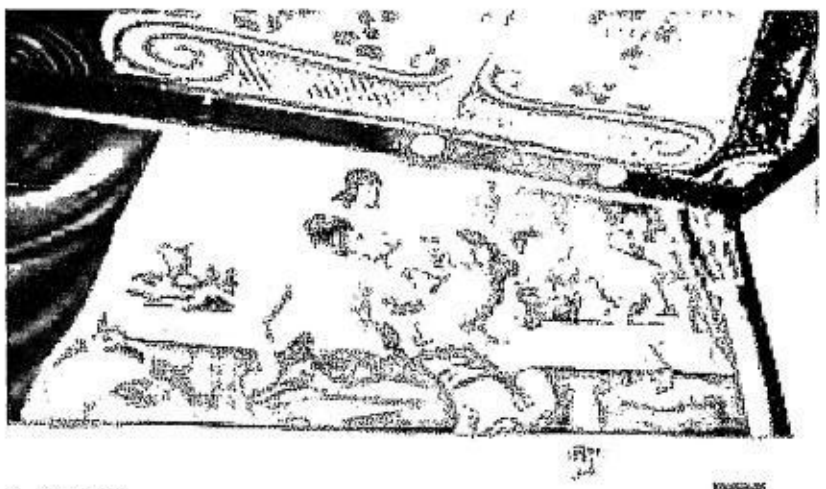
Café Ysabel: Osmanthus and Sour Peach Sorbet.

Gene's Bistro: Smoked Hanger Steak with Sweet-Breads and Ham, Stuffed Mushrooms, Truffle Demi, Potato Dauphinoise, Torres Mas La Plana 2002

The Smiling Chef: Strawberry Shortcake, Balsamic Ice Cream on Brandy Snaps, Ginger Caramel Sauce, Balsamic Glaze, Torres Moscatel d'Oro.

Rose Petal Pralines.

Coffee or Tea.



A TRADITIONAL San Juan-style "bahay bakasyunan" is today's Café Ysabel.

THE AMBIANCE is total—heritage architecture, wall and ceiling frescos, and great food.

Neigborhood presence

Gene's menu surpassed many of his own menus we enjoyed in the past quarter of a century. Café Ysabel has happily been our neighborhood bistro. It still is.

Although we now live on the opposite side of town, within walking distance to many of the most fashionable restaurants of the moment, we still go back to Ysabel from time to time simply because body and soul feel so good to be there.

May 2008 find you always in places where your body and soul feel good.

E-mail the author at pride.place@gmail.com

Author answers issues on the 'Aranetas'

By Maria Lina Araneta Santiago
Contributor

DEAR FR. MIGUEL BERNAD,

Thank you very much for your book review ("The Aranetas in Philippine History," Lifestyle INQUIRER, Dec. 10). I am really very pleased that people are reading not only about my having written a book on my family but the story of my family.

It is heartwarming to know that I have contributed to a better understanding of our country's history, which is also what a young writer, Ed Biado, wrote in his article in the Manila Standard, "Through the Eyes of an Araneta."

He writes: "The more we read the book and the more pictures we see, the better understanding and appreciation for Filipinos we gain ..."

If you do not mind, I would like to disagree with you that I did not mention all the children of Gregorio, and that their husbands were not mentioned. Please take a look at p. 65.

I did a head count several times to make sure the 14 children were included in Chapter 3 (kindly see p.67 yearly additions). I took another head count today to see if all the wives or husbands were mentioned and they were.

The wedding photos of everyone who got married are also included in the book. If you could also take a look at pages 101 and 102, you will find all the photos of all the children of Don Gregorio.

As the other art collection of my Tito Luis, the donation of the antiques of T. Luis is mentioned on 78. When the exhibit was first opened, it featured his antiques, not his paintings.

However, you are right in the family of Salvador. The four children born before the war were mentioned in "Life in Victoneta," while Regina's birth was mentioned postwar.

The pictures of all the sons-in-law of Salvador are in the book except the husband of Regina. By that time, when they were in Vancouver, there were no more family photos that had everyone together.

On the debate—I did not seem to read about the intervention of Father Ortiz in the Magsaysay biography written by Abueva, though it might have been an oversight. I just wrote to Ding Lichauco to ask him to fill me in on this matter, as I always had the impression my father was a consistent advocate for industrialization.

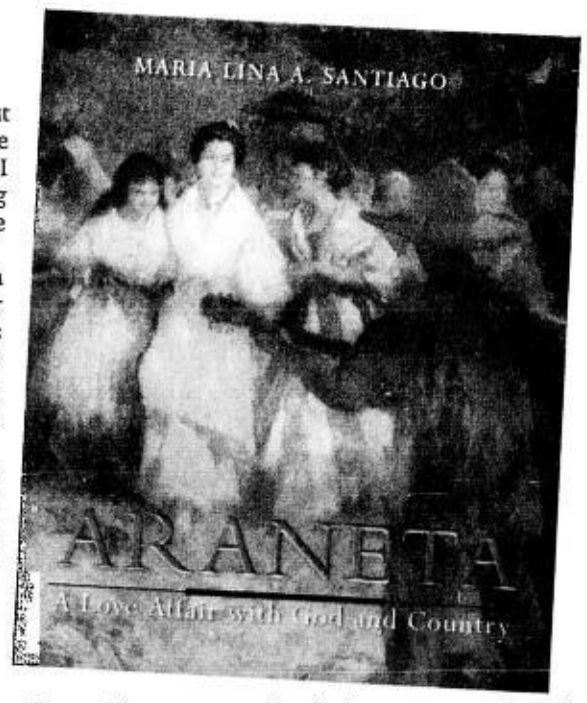
Were there two big debates when my father was agriculture secretary? What I wrote about was the Araneta Plan versus the Rodriguez Plan. When Dad advocated the New Deal formula for Mindanao and the relocation of families there, that, indeed, was agricultural development but at the same time he called for the establishment of basic industries and giving incentives to private investors. (Kindly refer to pp 370 and 371).

As to his *obras pias*, well, you are again right. We never asked Dad why he wanted a foundation. But for the right to keep the Blessed Sacrament, that I missed in explaining when I wrote about the Pious House.

The chapel, the dorm were all classified under the so called Pious House. Hence we were not allowed to dance rock-and-roll and things like that.

I missed the reason for the Pious House classification. He did mention many times that he could live forever through his school.

There are many things I would have loved to ask my father and mother. Many times when writing this book, when I could not find what I wanted to write about, like the reference materials I knew I had, I would pray and ask them, Mom and Dad: What do you want me to write about. I would find new things which were better.



ENTERTAINMENT

Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

sms feedback: Inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Buboy blames 'detractors'

CESAR "BUBOY" MONTANO HAS ONE thing to say to "those trying to destroy my family," and it's not nice: "*May katapusan din kayo.*"

There was no way it could have escaped public notice that his wife Sunshine had recently—on Christmas Day,

BUBOY/E2

Get a free PAL Roundtrip Ticket or a Mango Bracelet Watch with a new HSBC credit card. Call (02) 85-800 now!

Mabuhay MILES MANGO

HSBC The world's local bank

Issued by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited

Terms & Conditions apply. See application forms for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5170 and 5128. Series of 2007

Gov't pledges more support for film industry

FDCP also calls on producers to take advantage of available funds

By Marinel R. Cruz

TURNING THE PHILIPPINES INto a hub for foreign film production in Asia is the major thrust of the Film Development Council of the Philippines in 2008, its chair Rolando "Jacky" Atienza said.

"The easiest way to effectively export our services is to get the producers to come here," Atienza told INQUIRER Entertainment.

B'wood, Singapore

Three of eight Bollywood film producers who recently visited the country have promised to make movies here next year. The producers came to check out the Philippines as an alternative site for Bollywood films.

"We are also hoping to develop joint ventures with Singapore," the FDCP chief said. "They have the technology, we have the creativity and the skills."

In November, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye represented the country in the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Philippines and Singapore. The signing coincided with the Asia Film Market and Conference, also in Singapore.

Calling producers

Atienza said the council will be more "aggressive" in investing in films—as co-proponent—in 2008. He said only a few producers have come forward to make use of the P25-million Film Fund, which has been in existence since 2006.

Films co-produced by the FDCP are Eddie Romero's "Faces of Love," Adolf Alix Jr.'s "Donsol," Pablo Biglang-awa Jr. and Veronica Velasco's "Inang Yaya" and Soxy Topacio's "Reyna."

"We're hoping that more producers will use the fund. It's really for them. Plus, the fund has to revolve so we can help other filmmakers," said Atienza.

Festival subsidies

The FDCP will continue to grant subsidies to independent film producers who get invited to international film festivals, he added.

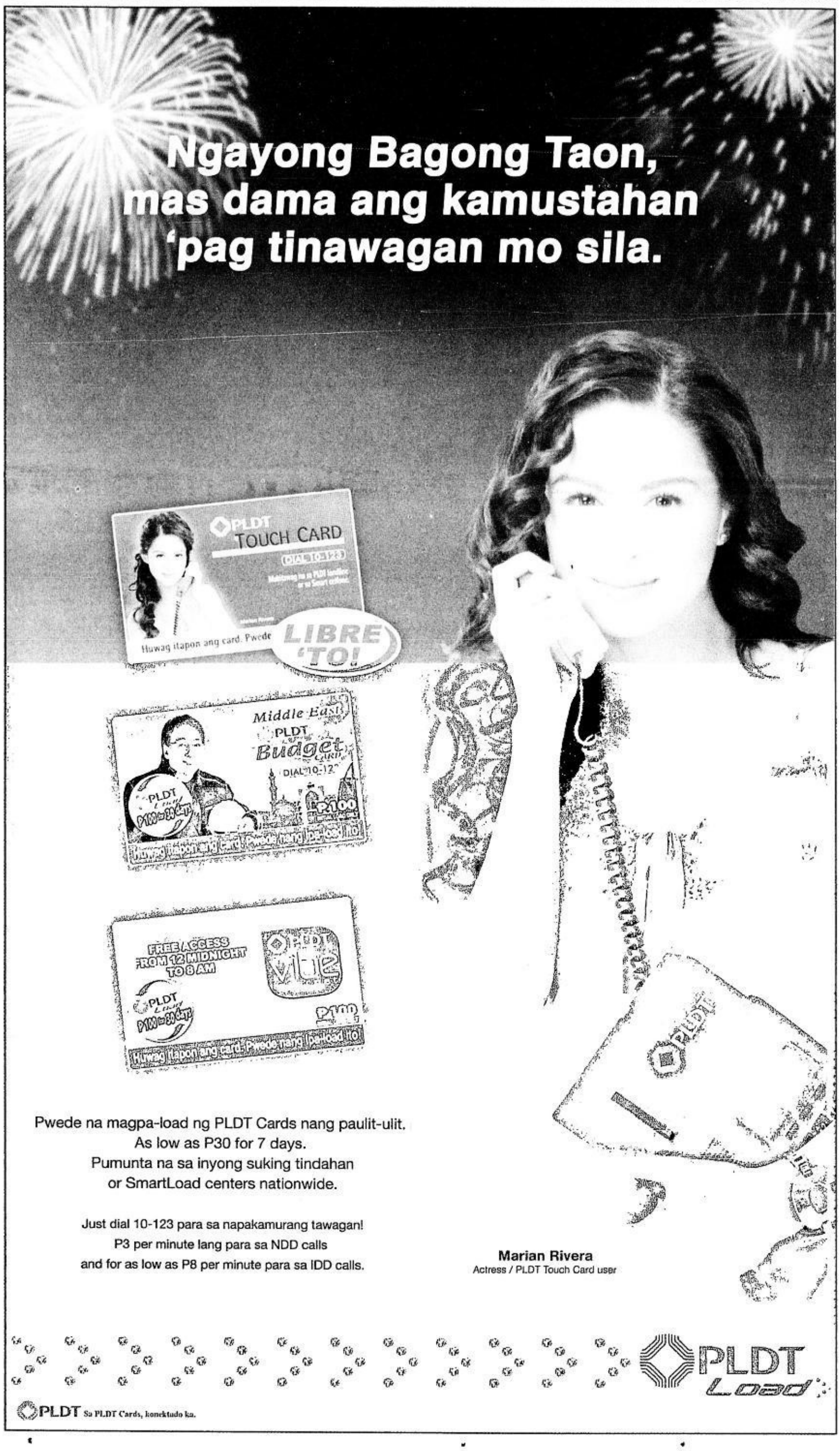
This year, an estimated P5 million were disbursed to finance the trips of films like Dante Mendoza's "Foster Child" and "Tirador," Jim Libiran's "Tribu," Lav Diaz's "Death of a Poet," Aureaus Solito's "Pisay," Neil "Buboy" Tan's "Ataul for Rent" and Alix's "Kadin" to various film festivals across the globe.

Atienza also said the FDCP will continue supporting locally produced film fests like the ongoing 2007 Metro Manila Film Festival. "This year, the FDCP was asked for festival raffle prizes," he ex-

GOV'T/E2

SHEILBERT Magat of "Tribu."

FDCP helped finance cast members' trip to a South Korean filmfest.



ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA
Ticket Price THX: P160 · 130 · 635-8116

1 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO • THX
12:10 2:30 4:50 7:10

2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
10:20 12:40 3:00 7:40

3 RESIKLO
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40

4 KATAS ng SAUDI
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40

5 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40

6 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
11:00 1:45 4:30 7:15

7 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
2:00 4:20 6:40

8 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
12:10 2:30 4:50 7:10

9 BAHAY KUBO
11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25

10 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
1:15 4:00 6:45

Dov Simens' 2-Day Film School™ in Manila

AIM CONFERENCE CENTER, Makati City • January 26 & 27, 2008 (9:00AM - 6:00PM)

To register (in person) visit any of the ff. Robinsons Movieworld branches: Galleria, Ermita, San Fernando Pampanga, Iloilo and Dasmariñas

online: visit www.filmmakingnow.com

For inquiries: Contact thinkCreative at 0905-3387959 or email at thinkcreativeproductions@gmail.com

AIM · Blessings · thinkcreative

Regular Registration: 12,500.00php
December Registration: 11,000.00php

ERMITA
Ticket Price: P120 · 536-7810 TO 12

1 RESIKLO
12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50

2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
11:20 1:55 4:30 6:55

3 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50

4 KATAS ng SAUDI
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45

5 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
1:15 3:50 6:25

6 BAHAY KUBO
12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50

7 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
2:30 5:00 7:30

Midtown

1 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
10:50 1:20 3:50 6:20

2 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20

3 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
2:25 4:45 7:05

METRO EAST
682-8183 · 682-8190

1 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30

2 BAHAY KUBO
11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30

3 SAKAL SAKALI SAKALO
11:15 1:40 4:05 6:30

4 RESIKLO
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35

5 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30

6 KATAS ng SAUDI
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:30

7 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
10:40 1:05 3:30 5:55

8 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
1:30 4:00 6:30

NOVALICHES

1 RESIKLO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
3 BAHAY KUBO
4 KATAS ng SAUDI
5 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
7 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
8 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO

PIONEER

1 RESIKLO
2 BAHAY KUBO
3 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
4 KATAS ng SAUDI

STA ROSA
Ticket Price P80 · (049) 837-0907

1 RESIKLO
2 BAHAY KUBO
3 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
4 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 4

LIPA
Ticket Price P90 · (043) 757-3664 · (043) 312-5870

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
2 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
3 BAHAY KUBO
4 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
5 RESIKLO

DASMARINAS
Ticket Price P80 · (046) 416-4332

1 RESIKLO
2 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
3 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
5 BAHAY KUBO

IMUS
(046) 875-3838 · (046) 471-8188

1 RESIKLO
2 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
3 BAHAY KUBO
4 KATAS ng SAUDI
5 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 4

ANGELES
Ticket Price P90 · (045) 892-2346

1 RESIKLO
2 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
3 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 4

TARLAC

1 RESIKLO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
3 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9

STARMILLS
(045) 875-12..

1 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
2 BAHAY KUBO
3 KATAS ng SAUDI
4 SAKAL SAKALI SAKALO
5 RESIKLO
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 4

BACOLOD
Ticket Price P70 · (034) 441-0459

1 BAHAY KUBO
2 SAKAL SAKALI SAKALO
3 RESIKLO
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
5 KATAS ng SAUDI
6 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9

ILOILO
Ticket Price P70 · (033) 336-8070

1 RESIKLO
2 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
3 BAHAY KUBO
4 KATAS ng SAUDI
5 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 4

GRAND DRAW with BAND CONCERT
January 19, 2008
Mall of Asia Music Hall

Participating Robinsons Movieworld Branches:
Galleria · Ermita · Metro East · Pioneer · Novaliches · Imus · Starmills, Pampanga · Iloilo

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 BAHAY KUBO
MTRCB GP
1:05, 3:50, 6:35

2 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL 9
MTRCB GP
12:30, 3:30, 6:30

3 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
MTRCB PG-13
12:05, 2:30, 4:55

4 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
MTRCB GP
11:50, 2:15, 4:40

PREMIERE THEATRE — CLOSED

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Catch the Cineplex Special

Avail the Shang Cineplex E-see Club Giftcards.
The Perfect Giftcard for the Holiday Season!
Its a gift your family and friends will surely appreciate.
Enjoy 10% discount on the E-see club membership fee.
Limited offer from Nov. 30, 2007 - Jan. 15, 2008 only.

6th floor, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
EDSA corner Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
Call 633-2227 or 633-4735 for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

POWER PLANT CINEMA

ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41 — DOLBY DIGITAL

RESIKLO G 1:00,3:20,5:40	ENTENG KABISOTE 4 G 12:50,3:10,5:30	SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL 9 G 11:40,2:20,5:00
BAHAY KUBO G 11:50,2:30,5.10	SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30	SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO PG13 11:00,1:10,3:30,5:50

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO GHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

NOW SHOWING

Movies/ Schedules/ Prices Subject To Change Without Prior Notice

Shang Cineplex — Shangri-La Plaza (Mandaluyong) Tel. 633.2227/633.7851 loc. 171
1 BAHAY KUBO
2 KATAS NG SAUDI
3 SAKAL, SAKALI, KASALO
4 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
PREMIERE
5 RESERVED

Blue Wave — Blue Wave (Marikina) Tel. 934.1927
1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
2 BAHAY KUBO
3 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
4 RESIKLO

Cineworld — (Isetann Recto) Tel. 733.4228
1 BAHAY KUBO
2 KATAS NG SAUDI
3 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
4 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
5 RESIKLO

Star mall — Tel. 726.6150
1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
2 RESIKLO

Shaw — Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 ; 533.3856
1 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
4 KATAS NG SAUDI

Cinemagic Pacific Mall (Lucena) Tel. 250.8263
1 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE -4

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) Tel. (043) 981.0790
1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
2 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
3 SAKAL' SAKALI, SAKLOLO
4 RESIKLO

Center Mall Cinema (Baguio) Tel. (074) 444.3946
1 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9

Centre Plaza Cinema (Bataan) Tel. (047) 237.7007
1 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9

Eastwood Cinemas — Eastwood City (Libis) Tel. 687.6963/ 687.6972
1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
4 RESIKLO

Festival Cinemas — Festival Supermall (Muntinlupa) Tel. 850.3571/ 850.3572
1 RESIKLO
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 ENTENG KABISOTE -4
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
5 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
6 BAHAY KUBO
7 RESIKLO
8 ENTENG KABISOTE -4
9 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
10 KATAS NG SAUDI

OPENS SOON!!!
CASH AND CARRY CINEMAS — Cor. Buendia and South Super highway, Makati City Tel. (to be announced)
1
2

Jade Cinema (Angeles) Tel. (045) 887.5001
1 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
2 RESIKLO
3 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) Tel. 850.1276
1 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
2 RESIKLO
3 KATAS NG SAUDI
4 SAKAL' SAKALI, SAKLOLO

Lianas Movie City (Calamba) Tel. (049) 545.7202
1 RESIKLO
2 SAKAL' SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
4 BAHAY KUBO
5 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4

Cinema 2000 Movie Theaters of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Makati) Tel. 816.4214/ 16
1 RESIKLO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
3 SAKAL, SAKALI, KASALO
4 KATAS NG SAUDI

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) Tel. (049) 547.7383
1 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
3 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Plaridel) Tel. (044) 795.3320
1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
2 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
3 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Gapan) Tel. (044) 486.7736
1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
2 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4

Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) Tel. (044) 486.7736
1 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
3 RESIKLO
4 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix (Urdaneta) Tel. (075) 568.6771
1 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9

Maragina Cinema (Pasay) Tel. 833.3274
1 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE - 4
3 RESIKLO

Metropolis Star (Alabang) Tel. 850.4285
1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL - 9
2 BAHAY KUBO
3 KATAS NG SAUDI
4 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO

THEATRES (Cabanatuan) Tel. (044) 600.5383
1
2
3 ENTENG KA

Araneta Center

Gateway · Ali Mall · Farmers Plaza · Farmers Market

Gateway Cineplex 10 — EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO 12:20 | 1:30 2:40 | 3:50 | 5:00	ENTENG KABISOTE 4 12:00 | 12:40 | 1:20 2:10 | 2:50 | 3:30 4:20 | 5:00 | 5:40	SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO 2:00 | 4:20

COMPLETELY UNOBSTRUCTED VIEWS — DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

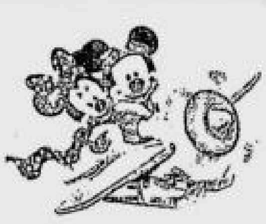
SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL 12:50 | 3:40	BAHAY KUBO 12:20 | 2:45 | 5:10	RESIKLO 12:40 | 3:00 | 5:10	KATAS NG SAUDI 12:30 | 2:50 | 5:10

ARANETA COLISEUM

Disney On Ice — Amazing Journey

Five times the fun in one Amazing Journey!

JANUARY 18 TO 27, 2008
GO TO WWW.DISNEYONICE-ASIA.COM/PH



For reservations call 911-5555 or log on to ticketnet.com.ph, aranetacoliseum.com or aranetacenter.net

Eagerly seeking Santas in show business

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

NOW THAT CHRISTMAS Day has come and gone, let's try to keep the spirit of the season alive and glowing by eagerly seeking other Santa Clauses in show business.

At first, the search for hope, goodness and inspiration appears to be a foolhardy mission, because show biz denizens are supposed to be selfish, self-obsessed self-promoters who are ready, willing and able to do anything to get ahead in the biz, no matter how many other comers they trample on along the way.

While that cynical and negative industry image is borne out by the "hot" scandals and controversies gossiped about on tabloid television, the entertainment world's real state of affairs isn't quite as bleak.

Asking around in the biz, we're happy to be informed that, while some stars charge an arm and a leg for their services, when it comes to fundraising shows, quite a number of luminaries are only too willing to waive their stellar fees completely, or to accept relatively small, "*pang*-taxi" honorarium.

Waiving fees

This is quite impressive, because stars earn much more than you and me, so when they waive their usual fee, they're giving up thousands or even hundreds of thousands of pesos, just so they can help make a fundraising show a success.

Sad to say, however, some "charities" take advantage of stars' generosity by claiming to be fundraisers for the poor, sickly or elderly, when their organizers, in fact, pocket most of the money raised.

Other celebrities complain that some shows have funds allotted for guest stars, but organizers sometimes tell stars that the shows are "pro bono" gigs—and pocket the fees that should have gone to the clueless guest entertainers!

As a result of these and other disheartening experiences, some otherwise generous stars have become cynical and choose their beneficiaries very carefully. But, when they sense that a fundraising show is on the up-and-up, they're as supportive as ever.

Caring ear

Another area in show biz where Santas abound is the "advice to the life-lorn" syndrome. Stars are very competitive, but when some of them hear that a colleague is in any kind of trouble, they're only too willing to lend a caring ear—and helping hand.

Some stars don't want their good works to be talked or written about, but they still get "found out" in the end, providing great inspiration to everyone.

For instance, the late **Fernando Poe, Jr.** quietly helped a lot of people, but, sought neither thanks nor recognition. Aside from assisting movie workers in need, he was also very supportive of workshops to develop new talents for the movie industry.

Other show biz luminaries who make time to mentor promising newcomers are also quietly at work in the theater, the music scene and children's television. They get very little or nothing at all for their pains, but the psychic satisfaction is great!

Some people believe that local entertainment is overrun by thousands of self-centered imps but Santa Claus' good-hearted elves and clones are alive and well in the biz!

Buboy blames 'detractors'

From page E1

no less—packed a few bags yet again and ran with her kids back home to mom.

Buboy is not amused.

"This is one of Shine's [knee-jerk] reactions to things," he told INQUIRER in an SMS. "Someone sent her a text message that poisoned her mind. She overreacted and speculated wildly."

The bone of contention is a Brazilian teen model who is said to frequent the couple's restaurant.

Buboy could have been frothing in the mouth when he sent this: "First I did not have a one-night stand, and I do not have any relationship, affair or any kind of thing with any Brazilian girl, especially *kung bata pa*. I'm not stupid. *Matagal kong pinagpaguran ang pangalan ko.* I'm not going to ruin it just like that. I love my wife and my family. My children are precious to me. *Hindi ko sila ipagpapalit para lang sa sandaling kaligayahan.* Perhaps my detractors overwhelmed my wife this time by sending that text message."

A while later, very likely still bristling, Buboy sent us another message:

"The handler of the said Brazilian model saw the news item (not in INQUIRER). She texted me and volunteered to speak out. She said, 'This is so unfair to you, Cesar.'" *Dolly Anne Carvajal*

CHILD actors in "Kadin," a recipient of FDCP assistance this year.

Gov't agency...

From page E1

plained."

The FDCP likewise assisted this year's Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival and Cinemanila International Film Festival.

"Next year, we'll be a little more involved in the animation industry," Atienza said. "We have a competitive edge there."

Atienza added that some 80 to 85 percent of films that applied for amusement tax rebates from the Cinema Evaluation Board (CEB) were graded.

Not all films are deemed eligible for grading. An "A" grade entitles a movie to a 100-percent tax rebate; a "B" fetches a 65-percent rebate.

Improved products

"This is reflective of the fact that Filipino films are improving," Atienza explained. "Also, the producers are slowly responding to changes in the market, which has become more sophisticated—requiring better-quality products."

He added: "This is why box-office returns of P100 million or more have become common."

Cathy Garcia Molina's "One More Chance," Maryo J. delos Reyes' "A Love Story" and Wenn Deramas' "Ang Cute ng Ina Mo" were some of the films that earned more than the P100-million mark this year, Atienza said.

Eastwood City's
New Year's Countdown to
2008
Welcome the New Year, as we take a journey through the different musical eras of our time, featuring Eastwood City's Resident Performers and other guest artists:
6:00 PM The Members
7:15 PM The Bloomfields
8:30 PM Richard Poon
10:00 PM LALA
11:30 PM The Rage Band
12:00 MN New Year's Countdown
12:30 AM onwards Street Party with Brigada and DJ Vhong
Eastwood City
EASTWOOD CINEMAS
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9 — 1:50, 4:50, 7:50 — G
SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO — 12:10, 2:50, 5:30, 8:10 — PG-13
ENTENG KABISOTE 4 — 12:55, 3:20, 5:45, 8:10 — G
RESIKLO — 2:05, 4:35, 7:05 — G
To receive Eastwood City Events, Promos and Cinema schedule just text eastwood and send to 2948 for Globe, Smart & Sun Cellular subscribers
For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

NOW SHOWING
IN MORE THAN 100 THEATERS NATIONWIDE
MARAMING SALAMAT PO, FOR MAKING US NO.1 AGAIN!
CONGRATULATIONS BOSSING!
THE UNDISPUTED BOX OFFICE KING!
CATCH "BLASTING MAN"-ARTHUR SOLINAP AND MIKYLLA RAMIREZ
ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 1, 2008 AT THE FOLLOWING SM CINEMAS:
SM FAIRVIEW,1:30 PM / SM NORTH,2:30 PM / SM MANILA,4:00 PM / MEGAMALL,5:30 PM
MTRCB RATING G ALL AGES ADMITTED
VIC SOTTO KRISTINE HERMOSA
IAN VENERACION FRANCINE PRIETO CARLOS AGASSI AND MICHAEL DE MESA
OYO SOTTO GISELLE "G" TONGI JOSE MANALO AIZA SEGUERRA
RUBY RODRIGUEZ MIKYLLA RAMIREZ ARTHUR SOLINAP AND PEQUE GALLAGA
Enteng Kabisote 4
Okay Ka Fairy Ko... The Beginning Of The Legend
A FILM BY TONY Y. REYES DGPI
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL 2007

NOW SHOWING!
PANOORIN ANG PINOY ROBOT!
GP GENERAL PATRONAGE ALL AGES ADMITTED RATED "A" BY THE CINEMA EVALUATIONS BOARD
RAMON "BONG" REVILLA JR.
RESIKLO
DINGDONG DANTES JENNYLYN MERCADO

AT THE CINEMAS
TFX
Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729-7777

GLORIETTA 1	1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9	2 BAHAY KUBO	3 ENTENG KABISOTE 4	4 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
GLORIETTA 4	1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9	2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4	3 TFX ENTENG KABISOTE 4 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO	5 BAHAY KUBO	6 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO	7 RESIKLO
GREENBELT 1	1 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO	2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4		
GREENBELT 3	1 TFX ENTENG KABISOTE 4 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 TFX SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 RESIKLO GUARANTEED SEATS	4 BAHAY KUBO GUARANTEED SEATS	5 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 TFX SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO	2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4		
	3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9	4 BAHAY KUBO	5 RESIKLO	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO	2 BAHAY KUBO	3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9	4 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
MARKET! MARKET!	1 ENTENG KABISOTE 4	2 RESIKLO		
	3 BAHAY KUBO	4 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO	5 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9	
TRINOMA • TFX Certified • All-Digital Sound • All-Stadium Seating • Computerized Ticketing System • Recliner Seats	1 RESIKLO	2 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO	3 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO GUARANTEED SEATS	4 ENTENG KABISOTE 4 GUARANTEED SEATS
	5 BAHAY KUBO	6 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9	7 TFX ENTENG KABISOTE 4 GUARANTEED SEATS	

AT THE MALLS
Ayala
CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS:
Glorietta - 752 7272
Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000

glorietta — FREE Christmas Gift Bag for every P300 worth of purchase. See leaflets for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-466, Series of 2007 November 15 to December 31, 2007

GREENBELT — Christmas Gift Box Promo. Get a FREE gift box for a minimum purchase of P3,000 at any Greenbelt establishment. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-490, Series of 2007. December 1 to 31

ALABANG TOWN CENTER — Shop and Experience Macau Promo. Get a chance to win a trip for two to Macau! Please see leaflets for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-442, Series of 2007 November 2 to December 31

AYALA CENTER CEBU — FREE Christmas Gift Bag for every P500 worth of purchase. See leaflets for details. Per DTI-Cebu Permit No. 584, Series of 2007 December 1 to 31

MARKET! MARKET! — FREE Christmas Gift Bag for every P500 worth of purchase. See leaflets for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-506, Series of 2007 December 1 to 31

Onstage — Repertory Philippines presents TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE. January 11 to 27, 2007. For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710 or visit www.repertory-philippines.com

Ayala MUSEUM — WATER: THE MEDIUM by Juvenal Sanso. November 24 to January 13, 2008; Ground Floor Gallery. For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org

TriNoma — FREE Christmas Gift Bag for every P500 worth of purchase. See leaflets for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-938, Series of 2007 December 1 to 31

Totally Entertaining!
watch a movie, win a TV!
in Glorietta 1 and Glorietta 4 cinemas only
Promo Period: November 22 to December 31, 2007
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-522. Series of 2007.

Celebrate your parties and events at TIMEZONE
PARTY ROOMS IN TIMEZONE GLORIETTA 4 ARE AVAILABLE FOR BOOKING STARTING JANUARY 2008
For inquiries, please call 914-7142/571-0927

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA
THEATRE-MALL
GREENHILLS
...a landmark reinvented!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 1 RESIKLO 10:30, 12:50, 3:10 5:30, 7:50 GP
CINEMA 2 BAHAY KUBO 11:40, 2:25, 5:10 7:55 GP
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
...a diverentertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9 11:20, 2:10, 5:00 7:50 GP
CINEMA 4 ENTENG KABISOTE 10:30, 12:50, 3:10 5:30, 7:50 GP
CINEMA 5 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO 11:00, 1:40, 4:20 7:00 PG13
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM

January 24, 2005	Dancing with the Champions 2	8:00 PM
Feb. 8-9, 15-16, 2008	Sitti, Rey Valera	8:00 PM
February 11, 2008	Kyla w/ Shamrock, Cueshe & Mojofly	8:00 PM
February 13 & 14, 2008	Jose Mari Chan	8:00 PM

TEATRINO
PROMENADE GREENHILLS

January 17, 2008	Angelos	8:00 PM
February 14, 2008	Lance Raymundo	8:00 PM
February 15 & 16, 2008	Gerald Santos	8:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS. CALL 722-4532 LOC 116

FUN SNAPS FROM 2007

PHOTO BY MIGUEL PUNZALAN

TWO FACES OF BLISS
Ali Sotto and her diplomat-husband Omar Bsaies' cross-cultural marriage extends to the kitchen. "We cook together," they told us in March. Now, this fun couple is bound for Madrid, his next post.
Meanwhile, quite by chance (below), INQUIRER Entertainment bumped into Donita Rose and son PJ in a Tagaytay resort, where the working mom was taping a TV show in May. It took little coaxing for the tot to ham it up for Marinel Cruz's camera.

imagine freedom from wires

Imagine how Bluetooth wireless technology can take you beyond the confines of wires to a limitless new world of music possibilities. Let the music flow with a Samsung Bluetooth headset (YA-BH 270) or Bluetooth speaker (YA-BS 300) and our three new wireless MP3 players. Immerse yourself in the lush 3" widescreen of the P2, groove with your friends using the side-out speaker of the S5 or kick back with the T10 and its fun graphic interface. The freedom to revel in your music with no strings attached. With the new Samsung Bluetooth MP3 players, it's not that hard to imagine. To learn more, visit www.samsung.com/bluetoothMP3.

P2
8GB
Touchscreen UI
MPEG4/ WMV/ MP3/ JPG
Drag & Drop
DNSE 2.0
Bluetooth Capable

S5
1GB/ 2GB
Key LED Touchpad
MPEG4/ WMV/ MP3/ JPG
Drag & Drop
DNSE 2.0
Bluetooth Capable

T10
2GB/ 4GB
Built-in Speakers
MPEG4/ WMV/ MP3/ JPG
Drag & Drop
DNSE 2.0
Bluetooth Capable

Samsung Electronics Philippines Corporation Ground Floor, Bonaventure Plaza, Ortigas Avenue, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila
Samsung Customer Contact Center TOLL FREE 1-800-10SAMSUNG for PLDT or 1-800-3SAMSUNG for Digitel

SAMSUNG

NOW ON DISC

'Shrek The Third'

ONCE UPON A time, an ogre lived in an enchanted castle.

The story continues as Magnavision Home Video presents "Shrek The Third" on VCD and DVD.

When Shrek married Fiona, the last thing he wanted was to rule Far Far Away. But when his frog-in-law, King Harold, suddenly croaks, Shrek is fitted for the crown.

Lending their voices to the animated film are Mike Myers (Shrek), Eddie Murphy (Donkey), Antonio Banderas (Puss in Boots) and Cameron Diaz (Pricess Fiona).

'1408'

Renowned horror novelist Mike Enslin (John Cusack) believes only in what he sees with his eyes.

But things change when he checks into suite 1408 of the notorious Dolphin Hotel for his latest project.

Defying the warnings of hotel manager Olin (Samuel L. Jackson), the author becomes the first to occupy what is known to be a haunted room.

"1408," a Stephen King adaptation, is directed by Swedish writer-director Mikael Hafstrom.

'Rogue Assassin'

After his partner is brutally murdered by the infamous assassin Rogue (Jet Li), FBI agent Jack Crawford (Jason Statham) vows to find the elusive killer and avenge his partner's death.

But Rogue proves untraceable until three years later when he resurfaces to ignite a bloody turf war between Chinese mob leader Chang (John Lone) and Japanese Yakuza boss Shiro (Ryo Ishibashi). Also starring Devon Aoki and Luis Guzman.

'Surf's Up'

Teenage Rockhopper penguin Cody Maverick, up-and-coming surfer, enters his first competition.

Cody believes winning will bring him the admiration and respect he desires until he comes face-to-face with a washed-up old surfer named Geek and discovers what a true winner really is.

"Surf's Up" features the voices of Jeff Bridges (Big Z and Geek), Zooey Deschanel (Lani Aliikai), James Woods (Reggie), Jon Heder (Chicken Joe), Shia LaBeouf (Cody).

'Beyonce Experience'

Sony BMG Music Entertainment has released "The Beyonce Experience Live!" DVD, which captures the music and thrills of the singer's 2007 world concert tour.

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

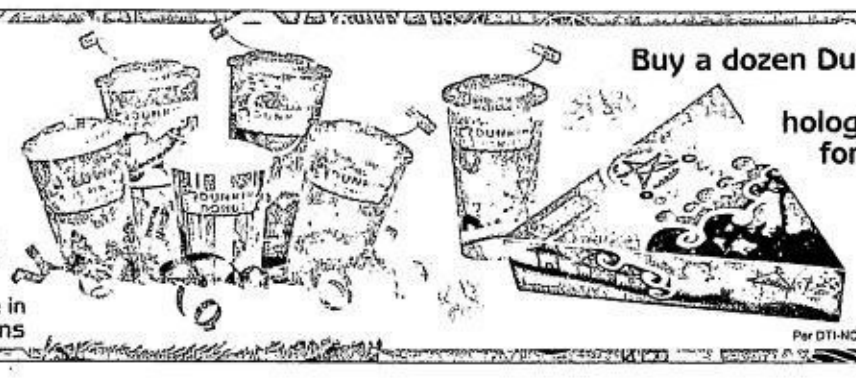
Expecting, now engaged

LOS ANGELES—ACTRESS Jessica Alba, 26, has gotten engaged to her boyfriend, producer Cash Warren.

Alba had announced earlier this month that she is pregnant.

"I can confirm that they are engaged," Alba's publicist, Brad Cafarelli told The Associated Press Thursday. *AP*

DUNKIN' DONUTS' Christmas Hologram Tumblers



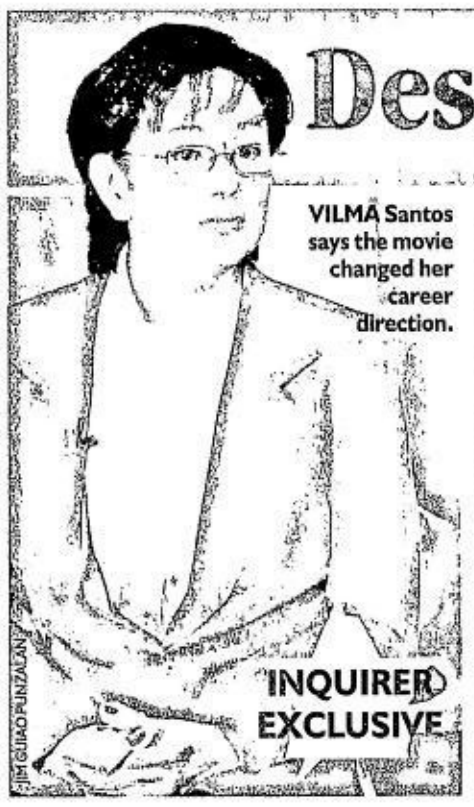
Buy a dozen Dunkin' Donuts and a hologram tumbler for P138

Available in 6 designs

Promo runs until December 31, 2007.
See posters for details.
© 2007 DD IP Holder LLC. All rights reserved

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4161, Series of 2007

Desperately seeking 'Burlesk Queen'



VILMA Santos says the movie changed her career direction.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

HAILED BY SOME CRITICS AS A MODERN Filipino movie classic, "Burlesk Queen" is also something of a Holy Grail for film archivists.

According to urban legend, a copy of "Burlesk Queen" was irretrievably lost after a storage room in the Manila Film Center was flooded following heavy rains sometime in the 1980s.

Film archivist Teddy Co, however, told INQUIRER Entertainment that the last known copy of "Burlesk" had been damaged "in a film laboratory's warehouse, not at the MFC, but also because of a sudden downpour."

Pinoy film classic located in Germany

Co said, "Film archives have three known enemies: flood, fire and war. That's why we have recovered very few films from the 1930s and 1940s."

But Celso Ad. Castillo's "Burlesk Queen" is a fairly recent movie. It was the controversial landslide winner in the hotly contested 1977 Metro Manila Film Festival.

In a recent interview with INQUIRER Entertainment, Castillo corrected the impression that his film was "lost forever."

"I was told by [producer] Manny Nuqui that a copy was found in Germany," Castillo said. "And I heard that the current owner has a high asking price. Maybe he is aware of the film's importance."

Nuqui, president of the Philippine Motion Pictures Producers Association (PMPPA), confirmed that he had heard of an existing copy of "Burlesk" in Europe.

"Mowelfund was tasked to recover it years after its producer, Ian Film Productions, sold it abroad in the late 1970s," Nuqui related.

Nick Deocampo, Mowelfund director, informed INQUIRER Entertainment that "Burlesk Queen" is available on VCD. "But it's blurry," he said, "made from a Betamax copy."

He also said that Mowelfund had traced "negative and print copies" to the present owner, Manfred Diurneok, based in Frankfurt, Germany.

DESPERATELY/ F3

"FROM my po-sweet image," says Santos, "I dared become a more serious actress."

PHOTO COURTESY OF VILMASANTOS.TRIPOD.COM

Drink nature in.

With Tropicana Gold, you're drinking juice from carefully selected oranges, so you're ensured that you're getting nature's best. Containing the real juice goodness of 8 freshly squeezed oranges, it naturally has zero cholesterol and zero fat. It is also a good source of Vitamin C and Potassium. Tropicana Gold 100% Orange Juice. Nutrition from Nature.

Nothing Beats 100%

Because you always want to give 100% in every task, you'll love Tropicana Gold.

WORLD'S Nº1 Tropicana 100% JUICE BRAND.

One pack contains the real juice goodness of 8 freshly squeezed oranges which naturally has zero fat and zero cholesterol. It's a good source of Vitamin C, which is an important antioxidant that helps support the immune system. In addition, it contains Potassium and has no Sodium; and diets that include food that contain potassium and low sodium may reduce the risk of high blood pressure and stroke. All these health benefits come only from Tropicana Gold 100% Orange Juice.

So when you drink a glass of Tropicana Gold 100%, you're not just drinking juice, you're drinking nutrition from nature.

Tropicana GOLD

100% Nutrition from Nature.

A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA

A. LIPIN — BY JESS ABRERA

PUGAD BABOY — BY P.M. JUNIOR

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY — BY LYRA GARCELLANO

LOVEKNOTS — BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

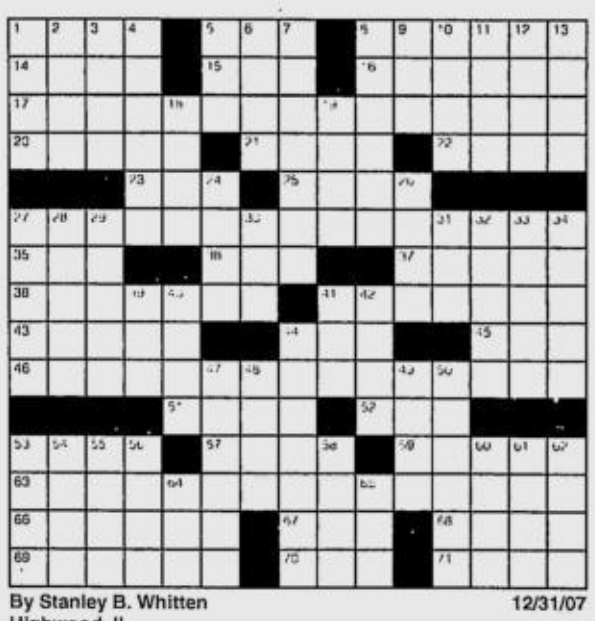
KIKO MACHINE — BY MANIX ABRERA

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 18-wheeler
5 Hot tub
8 Clever
14 Bit
15 Fled
16 Unskilled laborer
17 Something old
20 Follow in order
21 Dilatory
22 English county
23 Roh __-woo of Korea
25 Karamazov brother
27 Something new
35 Actress Balin
36 Order to shut up
37 Staircase post
38 With more care
41 Hogged the mirror
43 "Sesame Street" Muppet
44 Before now
45 Seth's mother
46 Something borrowed
51 Hurly-burly
52 Stretch of time
53 Crazily
57 Grow weary
59 Colossal
63 Something blue
66 Like some skates
67 Silly Caesar
68 Latin being
69 Tried out
70 Mil. training course
71 Overdo the mothering

DOWN
1 All there
2 Berkshire school
3 Sphagnum
4 Credit to a cause
5 __ Lanka
6 Kitchen utensils
7 Art of fishing
8 Big name in mutual funds
9 __ pollo!
10 Music genre
11 Actress Sommer
12 Austrian capital, locally
13 Fender damage
18 Backdoor
19 Small bay
24 Boundary
26 Hawaiian goose
27 Actor Bruce
28 Latin American January
29 Pat's "Wheel of Fortune" partner
30 Pole with a blade
31 Charge for services
32 Held the title to
33 Christopher of "Superman"
34 Church leader
39 Bolivian export
40 Hit the road
41 Woods' org.
42 Lady Macbeth, e.g.
44 Italian lover
47 Decayed
48 Comic strip pup
49 Cogito __ sum
50 Caught red-handed
53 Came down
54 Lion's do
55 Birds in barns
56 Contract in wrinkles
58 __ the Red
60 Besides
61 Political cartoonist
62 Clan chart
64 United
65 Today's LPs



By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL
12/31/07

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

H	E	A	D	C	H	E	E	S	E	S		C	S	T
R	A	D	I	O	A	C	T	I	V	E		O	A	R
S	U	S	A	N	R	U	T	T	A	N		D	N	A
			S	D	S		A	C	C		O	L	I	N
H	E	M		O	H	M		O	U	T	W	I	T	S
E	Q	U	A	L	E	D		M	E	D	F	V	A	C
P	U	L	L	E	R	S		S	E	S		E	R	E
T	I	T	I								B	R	I	N
A	V	I		L	O	L		S	T	C	L	O	U	D
M	A	L	A	I	S	E		T	E	A	T	I	M	E
E	L	I	C	I	T	S		L	A	T		L	S	D
T	E	N	T		R	O	W		R	A	N			
E	N	E		L	I	T	H	O	G	R	A	P	H	S
R	C	A		S	C	H	O	L	A	R	S	H	I	P
S	E	L		T	H	O	M	A	S	H	A	R	D	Y

(C)2007 Tribune Media Services, Inc.
All rights reserved.
12/31/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You truly appreciate beauty in the world. You have artistic sensibilities, and whatever you do, you do carefully. You need harmony and unity in your surroundings. You like a peaceful environment and rarely rock the boat. Most of you have excellent taste. Your year ahead might be one of the best years of your life. Dream big!

Birthdate of: Anthony Hopkins, actor; George Thorogood, musician; Ben Kingsley, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): With the Moon opposite your sign today, you have to go more than halfway when dealing with others. Simply be prepared to do this. (It's no big deal.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You feel orderly and disciplined today. This is a good way to end the year. Tidy up loose details so that you can begin your new year as cleanly as possible!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Make plans to party and have fun with friends. You're in a flirtatious mood. You want to have a good time. Enjoy playful activities with children.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Devote attention to home, family and especially parents today. There are domestic details you have to attend to. You also might want to entertain at home.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is a busy day for you. Discussions with siblings are important. Short trips, errands and shopping are important. Clean up loose details so that you can start your new year fresh!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Attend to banking and financial matters today. Make friends with your bank account. Pay some bills. You want to start your new year as debt-free as possible.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): The Moon is in your sign today, and this brings you a little bit of extra good luck. It's a wonderful way to get ready for the new year!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Try to take a breather today. This has been a busy month for you. Discussions with siblings and relatives are significant. You want to tell someone something.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Discussions with friends, especially female friends, will be warm and friendly today. Someone might need to confide something in you. Be ready to offer a sympathetic shoulder.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You likely will call attention to yourself today, perhaps inadvertently. It might even be something like a public quarrel. (Oops.) Be aware of your behavior.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You're interested in people from other countries or different cultures today. You're keen to learn something new. Someone might say something that surprises you because it's sort of weird.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Be patient with others if their values are not the same as yours. The truth is that all people are more alike than they are not. (Everybody wants to be happy; nobody wants to suffer.)

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis SudoKu By Dave Green

4	6			7			3	2
5	8			2			9	7
			5	9				
		6	2				8	
	1	5				3	2	
	3				9	7		
				4	2			
6	2			3			1	5
9	4			1			6	8

Difficulty Level ★ 12/31

©2007 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

7	2	3	6	4	1	9	8	5
6	5	4	3	8	9	7	1	2
8	9	1	5	7	2	3	6	4
2	6	9	1	5	4	8	3	7
3	7	5	9	6	8	2	4	1
4	1	8	2	3	7	6	5	9
5	8	2	4	9	3	1	7	6
9	4	7	8	1	6	5	2	3
1	3	6	7	2	5	4	9	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 12/30

©2007 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Desperately seeking...

From page F1

Deocampo recalled that, a few years back, Diurneok had asked Mowelfund for "round-trip business class tickets" so terms of the resale could be negotiated in Manila.

"It was a reasonable request," Deocampo noted, "but no one picked it up, and the deal fell through."

Could "Burlesk" ever come home?

Castillo certainly hopes so.

The film is occasionally aired on cable TV, he said. "But watching it on the big screen is a completely different experience."

Just as optimistic about the "Burlesk" retrieval is its lead star, Batangas Gov. Vilma Santos.

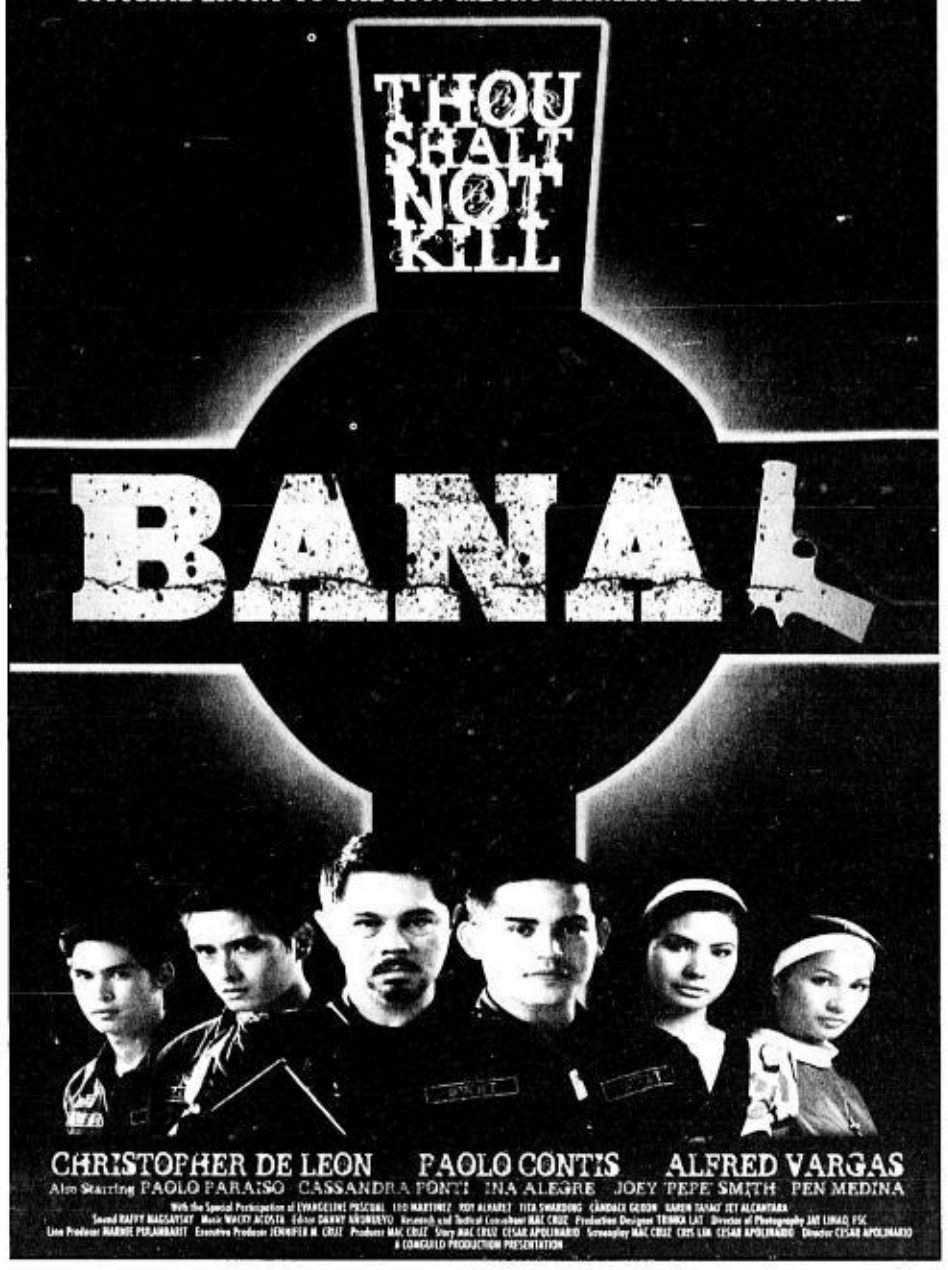
"'Burlesk' is one of my favorite movies," she said. "It was a turning point in my career. From my *pa*-sweet image, I dared become a more serious actress."

OPENS TOMORROW

MTRCB PG-13 | STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE

COMGUILD Production Co.

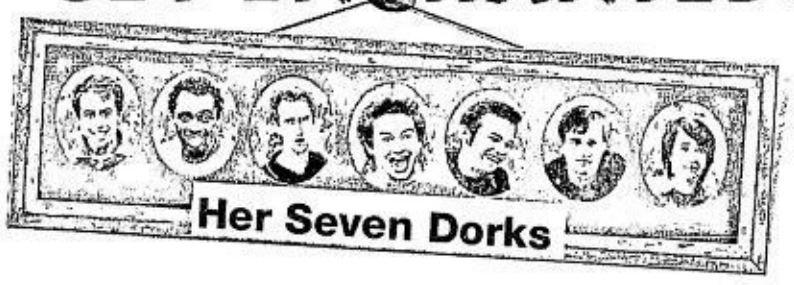
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE 2007 METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL



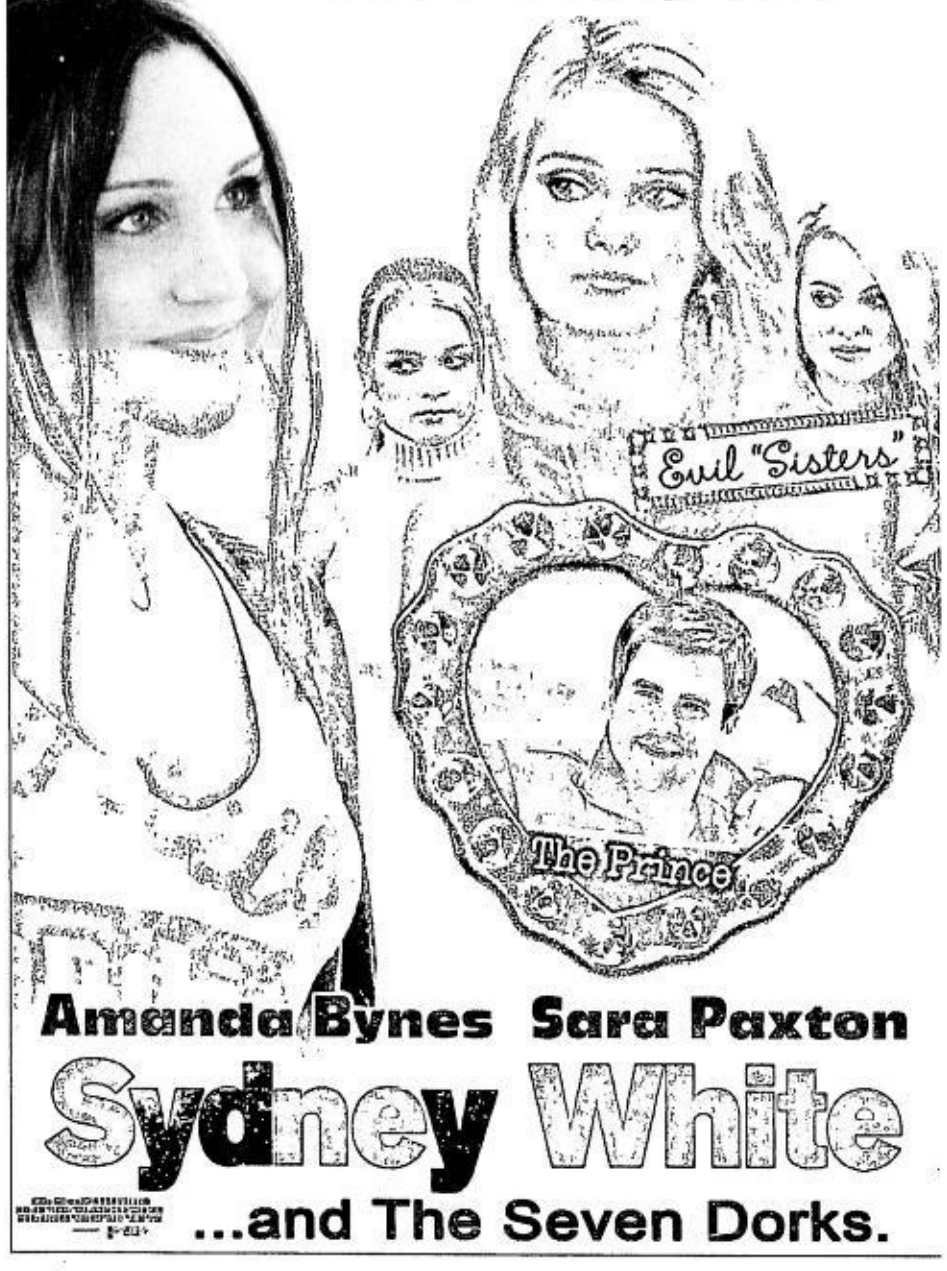
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

OPENS JANUARY 8

GET ENCHANTED!



Life is a Fairy Tale.



Amanda Bynes Sara Paxton

Sydney White

...and The Seven Dorks.

SM CINEMA

SHARE A MOVIE WITH A LOVED ONE

movietime SHOWTIME™

VISIT WWW.SMCINEMA.COM
Powered by WWW.YEHEY.COM

Your life as a movie

BIG MOVIES • BIG STARS • BIG SHOWS • BIG EVENTS

Celebrate New Year at SM Cinema with the stars of

RESIKLO

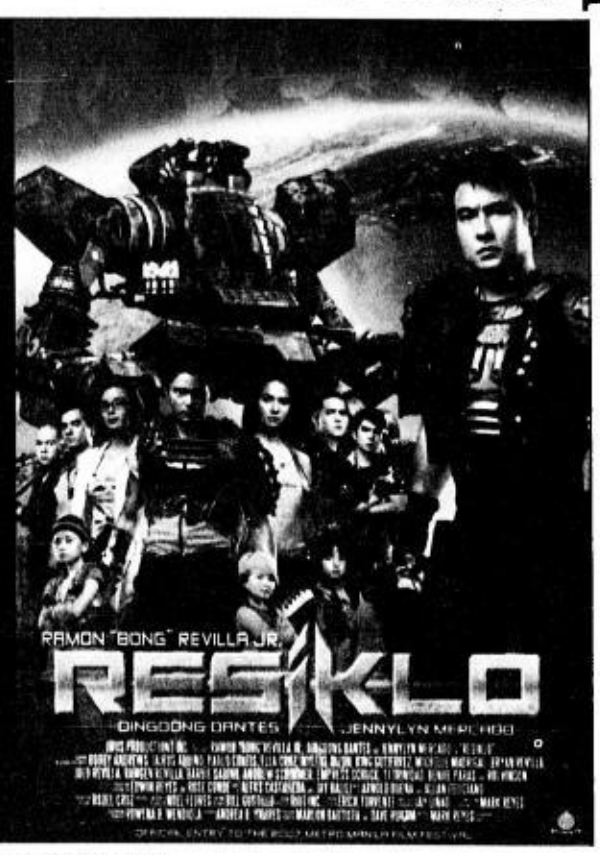
Jennylyn Mercado, Benjie Paras, Bryan Revilla, Jolo Revilla

Meet-and-Greet activity on December 30 (Sunday) at the following SM Cinema branches:

North EDSA, 1:00 p.m.
Megamall, 3:00 p.m.
Manila, 5:00 p.m.
Mall of Asia, 7:00 p.m.

An official entry to the 33rd Metro Manila Film Festival-Philippines

NOW SHOWING AT ALL SM CINEMAS NATIONWIDE



METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104

IMAX

POLAR EXPRESS 3D — Admission Price ₱400
10:00 AM • 12:30 PM • 5:30 PM
BEOWULF 3D — Admission Price ₱400
3:00 PM

1 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
2 BAHAY KUBO
3 KATAS NG SAUDI
4 RESIKLO
5 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 4

PREMIERE CINEMA
ENTENG KABISOTE 4
CENTERSTAGE
SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
DIRECTOR'S CLUB
Bookings now accepted. Inquire at 556-2314.

THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
CINEMA 2
ENTENG KABISOTE 4
For ticket reservations, dial 6338976
All major credit cards accepted

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452

1 BEOWULF 3D
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL 9
4 BAHAY KUBO
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
7 RESIKLO
8 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
9 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
10 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL 9
11 KATAS NG SAUDI
12 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901

1 SAKAL,SAKALI,SAKLOLO
2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
3 SAKAL,SAKALI,SAKLOLO
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
5 RESIKLO
6 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
7 KATAS NG SAUDI
8 BAHAY KUBO
9 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
10 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
11 SAKAL,SAKALI,SAKLOLO
12 ENTENG KABISOTE 4

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

1 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
2 KATAS NG SAUDI
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9
4 RESIKLO
5 BAHAY KUBO
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
7 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9
8 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
9 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
10 RESIKLO
11 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
12 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 RESIKLO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
3 KATAS NG SAUDI
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
2 KATAS NG SAUDI
3 BAHAY KUBO
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
5 RESIKLO
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 4

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

1 BAHAY KUBO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
3 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
5 RESIKLO
6 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9
7 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9
8 BAHAY KUBO
9 KATAS NG SAUDI

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 RESIKLO
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
4 BAHAY KUBO
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
6 KATAS NG SAUDI
7 RESIKLO
8 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
9 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
10 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL

NOW OPEN

SM SUPERCENTER MUNTINLUPA 862 5693

1 BAHAY KUBO
2 RESIKLO
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
4 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
4 RESIKLO
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
6 RESIKLO
7 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
8 KATAS NG SAUDI
9 BAHAY KUBO
10 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
11 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
12 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917

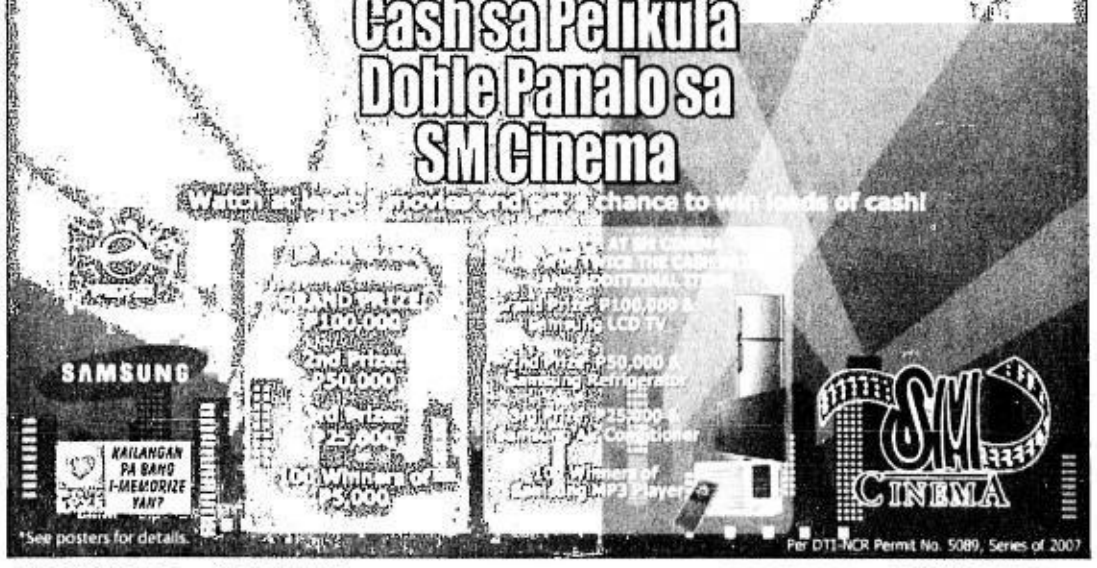
1 RESIKLO
2 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
3 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
4 ENTENG KABISOTE

The 33rd Metro Manila Film Festival-Philippines

Win up to P100,000 PLUS other exciting prizes!

Cash sa Pelikula Doble Panalo sa SM Cinema

Chance to win loads of cash!



*See posters for details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5089, Series of 2007

LUZON

SM CITY DAGOOR (046)417-3868

1 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
3 RESIKLO
4 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
6 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
7 KATAS NG SAUDI
8 BAHAY KUBO

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 9
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 4

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
2 RESIKLO
3 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
4 SHAKE RATTLE & ROLL

SM CITY BASMARINAS (046)4323201-04

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
4 RESIKLO

NOW OPEN

SM CITY TAYTAY 286-2502 to 04

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
2 RESIKLO
3 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO

SM CITY LIPA (043) 784-0187

1 RESIKLO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
3 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9037081-85

1 RESIKLO
2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
3 BAHAY KUBO
4 KATAS NG SAUDI
5 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 4

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811

1 RESIKLO
2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
4 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
4 RESIKLO

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39

1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 RESIKLO
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 4

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

1 RESIKLO
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 KATAS NG SAUDI
4 BAHAY KUBO
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
6 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04

1 RESIKLO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
3 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998

1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
2 BAHAY KUBO
3 KATAS NG SAUDI
4 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
6 RESIKLO

SM CAGAYAN DE ORO (088)859-2884

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
2 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
3 BAHAY KUBO
4 RESIKLO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422

1 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
2 RESERVED
3 BAHAY KUBO
4 KATAS NG SAUDI
5 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
7 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
8 RESIKLO

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

1 RESIKLO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
4 BAHAY KUBO
5 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
6 KATAS NG SAUDI
7 SAKAL, SAKLI, SAKLOLO
8 SAKAL, SAKLI, SAKLOLO

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010

1 SAKAL, SAKALI, SAKLOLO
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL
4 RESIKLO

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

Non-stop music tonight at Eastwood

EASTWOOD CITY'S "NEW Year's Countdown to 2008" tonight features The Members playing 1970s rock 'n' roll at 6 p.m.; The Bloomfields interpreting 1960s golden hits at 7:15 p.m.; Richard Poon singing 1950s classics at 8 p.m.; Lala and her brand of alternative rock at 10 p.m.; and The Rage Band's 1980s new wave sounds at 11:30 p.m.

The countdown with fireworks display and laser lights show is set at 12 midnight, followed by a street party with the band Brigada and DJ Vhong's samba and house music.

All shows will be held at the Eastwood City Central Plaza in Libis, Quezon City.

SHOW TIME

Nonoy Lopez, Hyperbeat at Manila Pen

The Lobby New Year's Eve Gala Ball and Dinner tonight at the Manila Peninsula hotel will have Nonoy Lopez and his Band along with Hyperbeat from 10 p.m. to 3 a.m.

Call 8872888 or 8123456.

Tribe of Levi at Bellevue

Tribe of Levi will play pop, R&B and dance music at the New Year's Eve countdown tonight at the 20/20 bar of Bellevue Hotel, Alabang.

Opera at Hyatt Manila

The Philippine Opera Company, featuring classically trained talents dubbed The Three Waiters, Three Tenors and Opera Belles, performs tonight at the Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila. Call 2451234.

Livewire in Boracay

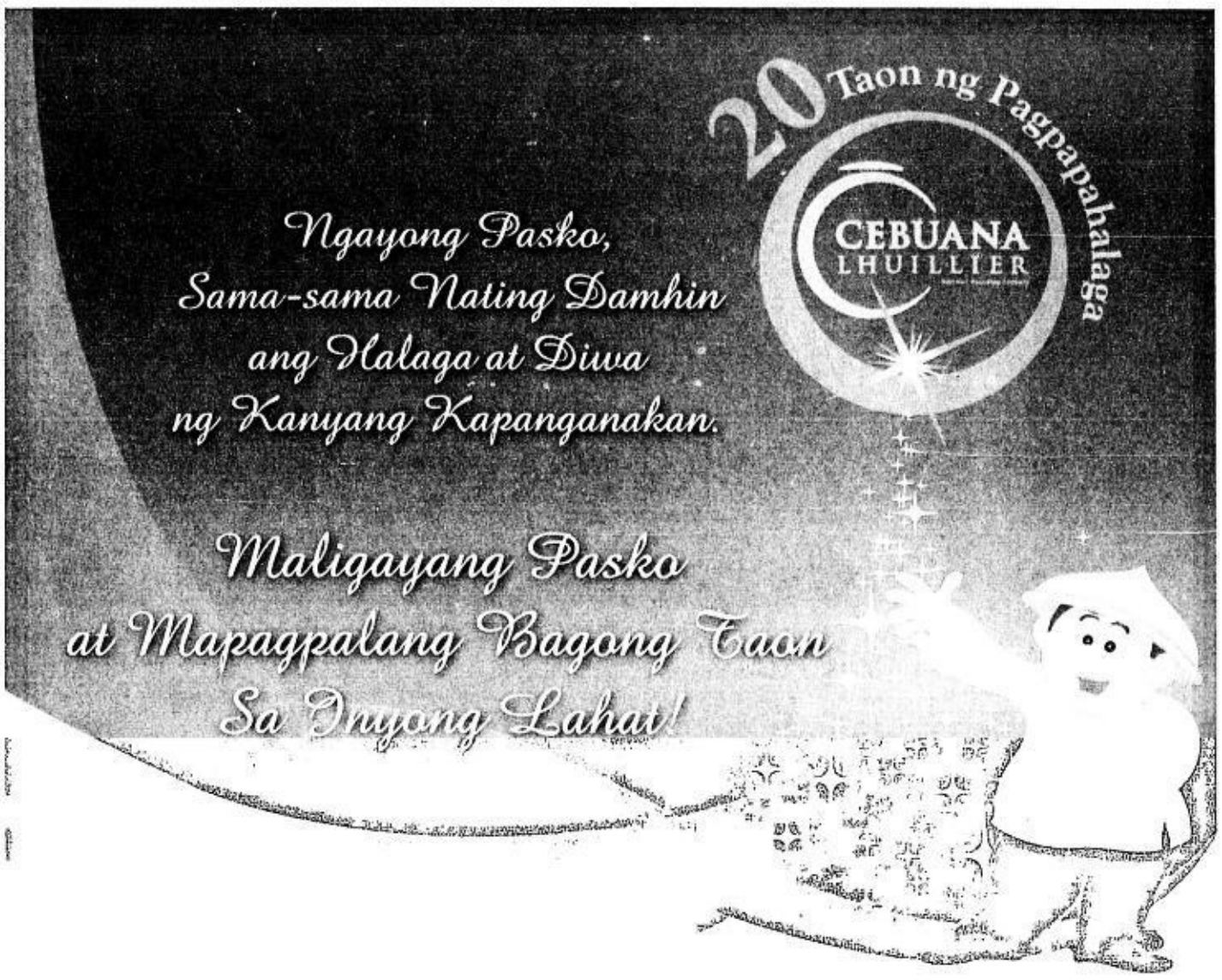
The Livewire band plays tonight at Discovery Shores, Boracay.

Call (036) 2884500.

'Evening with the Masters'

Pianist Elielle Grace Viaje, a music conservatory scholar in Vienna, interprets Chopin, Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert, among others in the classical concert "An Evening with the Masters" on Jan. 12, 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at the Word Community Church, 352 Capt. Henry Javier St., Brgy. Oranbo, Pasig City (near Ultra and Valle Verde Country Club). Call 910-0777 (office hours), 0917-8291526 (Wina) and 0917-5309623 (Carol).

TRIBE of Levi



ALLCARE INSURANCE
www.allcare-insurance.com

CEBUANA LHUILLIER
Walang Kapantay Magpahalaga
www.pjlhuillier.com

PERA PADALA
REMITTANCE NA KEPLAT BILIS!
www.perapadala.com

AWARDED Superbrands PHILIPPINES

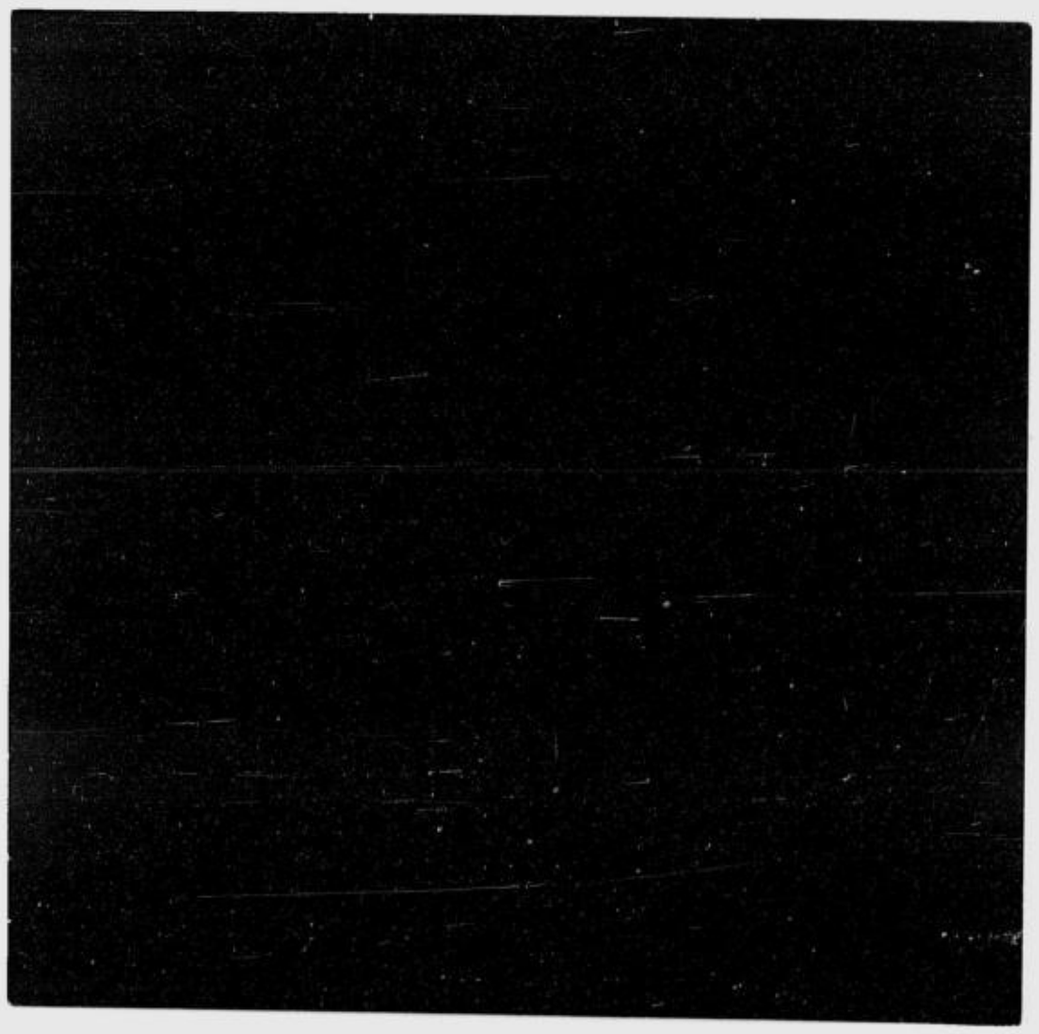
IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)

150mm

6"

APPLIED IMAGE, Inc
1653 East Main Street
Rochester, NY 14609 USA
Phone: 716/482-0300
Fax: 716/288-5989

© 1993, Applied Image, Inc., All Rights Reserved



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, PHILIPPINES

DECEMBER
16 THRU 31
2007

REEL 419

END

PLEASE REWIND